Death Unſtung:

A Funeral SERMON:

Rev. xiv. xiii.

And I heard a Voice from Heaven, ſaying unto me, write, Bleſſed are the dead which dye in the Lord, from hence-forth; yea, ſaith the Spirit, that they may reſt from their Labours, and their Works do follow them.

IT is none of the leaſt Works of a Miniſter of Chriſt to diſparage ſin, and incourage Holineſs, to ſet Life and Death before our People, and to preſent (as much as in us lies) Heaven and Hell to their view, and to perſwade them to a wiſe and ſpeedy choice; that when theſe Houſes of Clay ſhall

ſhall be laid in the duſt, they may be ſecured of an Habitation, not made with hands, that is, Eternal with God in the Heavens. The Apoſtle in this Chapter doth both, in the 10. *Verſe*, he tells us what a Draught is prepared for the implacable Enemies of Chriſt: they ſhall drink off the Wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture, into the Cup of his Indignation, and they ſhall be tormented with Fire and Brimſtone, in the Preſence of the holy Angels, and in the Preſence of the Lamb. The wicked may drink, roar, and ſwagger, they may perſecute the Members of Chriſt, becauſe they dare not ſo madly venture upon the Eternal diſpleaſure of God, as they do, and ſell their precious Souls for a Moments joy, and make light of Damnation: but let them know, that for all theſe things, GOD will bring them to Judgment; an Eternity of intolerable ſorrows muſt pay for their ſhort pleaſures. And hence it is the ſerious Chriſtian, that makes it his buſineſs to avoid this dreadful miſery, is ſatisfied that he doth not act irrationally and madly, if the ſcorn and contempt of the wicked World doth not frighten him; upon this account he patiently ſubmits to any puniſhment, rather than he will hazard the loſs of his Soul, and be miſerable for ever; that word for ever ſticks much in his mind, let the wicked laugh and be merry, let them pleaſe themſelves in his ſorrows, he knows 'tis but a little while, and all will be mended, and their minds changed; he is willing to ſtay for his happineſs and joyes, till he comes to another World; and he doth not envy the

wicked

wicked what they do enjoy, let them make the beſt of it as long as they can, and boaſt of their pleaſures, when they ſee themſelves wrapt up in Flames: The unſeen World, which moſt forget, is always in the Saints eye; and, if he may but live happily there, he paſſeth not if he run thorow reproaches, injuries, and a Thouſand Deaths, to that glorious and endleſs Life. Here is the Reaſon of the Saints Patience, this makes him judge it no folly to keep the Commandements of God, and the Faith of Jeſus. In the 13 *Verſe*, the Apoſtle comes to ſpeak a word of encouragement, not only to the ſuffering Saints of that Age, but for the ſupport of all that ſhould be honoured with ſuch ſervice, as to ſeal the truths of Chriſt with their blood. *And I heard a Voice from Heaven, ſaying unto me, write, Bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord from hence forth; yea, ſaith the Spirit, that they may reſt from their labours, and their works follow them.* In the Words you may take notice of Two Parts.

1. A Propoſition.
2. The Confirmation of that Propoſition.

1. The Propoſition, in which we may obſerve,
1. The Predicate, bleſſed.
2. The Subject, the dead.
3. The reſtriction and limitation of the Subject, which die in the Lord.

2. The Confirmation of this Propoſition.
1. They reſt from their labours.
2. Their works follow them.

3. The Perſon affirming this, the Spirit, which is further cleared.

1. By

1. By the manner of this Declaration, it was by a Voice from Heaven.

2. By the ſpecification of the Perſon to whom it was ſpoken; ſaying, unto me.

3. By the particular Note of Obſervation, Write.

The Doctrine which I ſhall take notice of from theſe words, is this.

Doct. That what-ever miſeries a Saint may meet with in this Life, at Death he ſhall be happy; or in the words of the Text, *That they are bleſſed which die in the Lord.* In the Proſecution of this Obſervation; I ſhall,

1. Enquire what it is to die in the Lord.

2. I ſhall prove that ſuch are bleſſed.

3. I ſhall ſhew wherein their happineſs doth conſiſt.

4. I ſhall make ſome Application.

1. I ſhall enquire what it is to die in the Lord.

1. Neg. *They which make it their buſineſs to do what they can againſt God, while they live, are not like to be bleſſed when they die.* They which live like Devils, are not like to die like Saints: Are there not a Generation in the World, who act for the Devil with all their might; and count all that time loſt, which is not ſpent in his ſervice; which make a jeſt of Damning, and are as merry within a ſtep of theſe devouring *flames*, as if Hell and a Tavern were alike? Do they not carry themſelves, as if they could not make haſt enough to miſery, and make ſure enough of Damnation? How do they wound and ſtab their own Souls, and let flie againſt the Almighty? How contemptible a thing is Heaven, and how

ridiculous

ridiculous is the very name of Holineſs to them? They are of the ſame mind of thoſe, which *Job* ſpeaks of: *Job* 21. 14. They ſay unto GOD, depart from us; for we deſire not the knowledge of thy ways. And who is the Lord, that I ſhould hearken to him? And, if a compaſſionate Miniſter of Chriſt beſeech them with all the tenderneſs that he can for his Soul, to bethink themſelves a little what theſe things may end in at laſt, and to conſider what a dreadful thing it is to fall into the hands of a living God; How are his perſwaſions rejected with contempt, and his pitty recompenced with ſcorn? And, may I not ſay of moſt wicked Men, they do flie in the Faces of them that would tell them of their danger, and do what they can to deliver them from it? And yet for all this, how well are they contented with their own condition, and laugh at the godly, as if it were a dangerous and mad thing to ſtrive to go to Heaven, and the trueſt happineſs to be miſerable for ever? O who would imagine, that any living ſhould be thus lamentably beſotted! Tell them of Hell, 'tis as much as their life is worth; they had rather hazard the feeling of it hereafter, then bear the hearing of it here. They fear a little diſgrace among Men, more than the contempt of God: They chooſe rather to be under the weight of God's wrath, than the leaſt affront from a Man. Talk to them of Glory, Heaven, and a Kingdom, they are light and trivial things with them; they had rather hear of a Whore, a Tavern, or Play; and yet theſe Monſters muſt be Sainted, and do more confi-

dently

dently expect a bleſſed Eternity after a life of wickedneſs, than ſome of the dear Children of God do: but, if ſuch as theſe ever come to Heaven without Repentance, then the Word of God is falſe: Doth not that ſay, *That the wicked ſhall be turned into Hell? — Tribulation and anguiſh upon every one that doth evil, and there is no peace, ſaith my God to the wicked.* The Devil himſelf may as well expect to ſhake off his Chains, and be reſtored to his loſt Glory, as they. O be not deceived, as you Sow, ſo you muſt Reap; Do not hope that you may do the Devils work, as long as you can, and that then God ſhould reward you with Salvation: no ſuch matter: You may more rationally expect, that God ſhould for your ſake pull the Sun out of the Firmament, than that he ſhould remove holineſs out of Heaven, and bring Hell in its place. If wicked Men will pleaſe themſelves with their own Deluſions, and look for Glory ſtill, they muſt thank themſelves, when they ſee how infinitely they are diſappointed; but I leave theſe as diſpairing to convince them of their folly, till Judgment and Flames make them to underſtand it.

2. *All that live upon the goodneſs of God here, are not like to be bleſſed after Death.* There is a vaſt difference between common and ſpecial mercies: Many partake richly of God's common bounty, that have not the leaſt intereſt in his love; God gives this World often-times to his greateſt Enemies, he gives Glory in another World, to none but his Friends and Children: Nay, let me ſpeak it freely (I am ſure I have

Chriſt

Chriſt and Scripture to warrant what I ſay) That they which gain this World with their neglect of Heaven, ſhall at their Death loſe both: Many receive temporal mercies, that ſhall never enjoy Eternal: *Job* 21. 9. *Luk.* 16. 25. O how greatly are they miſtaken, who think that Earl, Lord, Knight, *&c.* are words of any ſignificancy after Death; that hope that their honours here will procure them any real reſpect hereafter; that reckon Gold and Silver will go currant in that Country! Many that would be counted Perſons of ſome depth and wiſdome, make a World of ſtir about trifles, that drive a great Trade for that which is next to nothing, and that lay in no better Proviſions, than Gravel, Clay, or Dung, when they are bound for Eternity; and yet how do they bleſs themſelves, and ſay, I am rich, and increaſed in Goods, and have need of nothing: Soul take thine eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry! They think they make a very wiſe bargain, when they ſell their Conſcience, God, and Heaven, for a little of that, which ſome call Riches; not conſidering that a few Hours experience may make them know, though it may be, not cure this miſtake. O that I could but bring my Hearers out of this Deluſion! O that their apprehenſions were but rectified, and that they might know the real worth of things and Perſons! O that I could but bring down the price of ſublunary things, and raiſe the things of that other World to their true worth! Conſider that that holineſs, as meanly as you think of it, is the moſt excellent thing; that that is the greateſt Riches, and

Man's

Man's higheſt dignity: God knows no differ-ence between a Lord and a Beggar, a Prince and a Subject; He is no reſpecter of Perſons. If there be any difference, it lies here, that God hath more wrath in ſtore for them that had greater engagements, and better advantages to ſerve him than other had. I pitty the poor Lords of the World! and I am confident, he that knows the worth of Chriſt, and the nature of his own Soul, can't much envy them; they ſwell like Bladders upon Water for a Moment, and God blowes, and where are they? Now indeed they reckon themſelves very ſecure, and their Houſes are free from fear, neither is the Rod of God upon them, they take the Timbrel and Harp, and rejoyce at the ſound of the Organ: *Job* 21. They think them Fools that can ſpare their Riches, and want their greatneſs, ſo they may but have an eſtate in inviſibles, and ſecure an Inheritance that will laſt for ever; Theſe are the Men that hate ſeriouſneſs: and holineſs, which is the beauty of Earth and Heaven too, is undervalued by them. And how can they expect ſanctity ſhould be delightful to them hereafter, when it is abhorred now? how can they look for Heaven when they dye, when they thought it not worth their minding while they lived? No, no, verily, they have their reward, they have now their good things, and much good may they do them. O let me rather gain Chriſt at Death, though I looſe all beſides, than poſſeſs Ten Worlds here, and after all looſe my Soul. Could the mighty ones of the World, have but one Hours diſcourſe with one of their

Brethren

Brethren in Hell, I believe their Judgments would be hugely altered, and they would ſoon tell them that Riches and Honours, and whatſoever elſe moſt Men do purſue, let it be what it will below Chriſt, will yield them but little happineſs and comfort in another World. Riches profit not in the Day of Wrath: Do but read, *Luk.* 16. 19, 25. I am the larger, that if poſſible, I might prevent miſtakes, in matters of Eternal conſequence.

Thirdly, *There are Thouſands that ſeem to have a far better title to this bleſſedneſs, that will fall ſhort of it: and they are Profeſſors*, that call themſelves by the Name of the Lord. Not all that are called, yea, and eſteemed Chriſtians, are like to have any great benefit by Death. To be *Chriſtned*, and to be *Chriſtians* are two things: not every one that weareth Chriſt's Livery ſhall have his Wages. O how many Millions are there that have no better ſhelter, than a meer Name to themſelves, from the wrath of God! Is it not more than poſſible to hear, read, pray, and to be eſteemed a Saint, and yet to miſcarry everlaſtingly? How many ſeeming Saints ſhall gain nothing at Death, but a thorow knowledge of their own folly? And if to know what God's anger is, be an advantage, when there is no eſcaping of it; and if to have their hearts wounded, when there is no Cure to be had, be any profit; and if to be quite freed of Conſcience ſearching Miniſters be a happineſs when they are out of the reach of their help or pitty; then ſuch may be eſteemed bleſſed: but, if all this will but make the Flame hotter, then I leave any

ſerious Perſon to judg, whether it doth not concern Men and Women to look after better ſecurity, than this amounts to. Did you ever well ſtudy, *Mat.* 7. 21? I hope you will believe Chriſt, though you will not me; read that Scripture, and what ſaith Chriſt? O conſider ſeriouſly, that to be an Heir of Glory is no ſuch light matter, as moſt judg it to be. To be born to a Crown, and a Kingdom, and to have a good title to it, is a dignity indeed; but a Mad-man in Chains and Rags, may ſay he is a King, or a Lord. O pleaſe not your ſelves with fanſies. Sickneſs and Death is coming, and then you will know better, whether I had not ſome reaſon to be earneſt with you in this matter. I am moſt afraid of the confident *Phariſee*, that truſts in his poor ſorry Prayers, and his own righteouſneſs; O that I could but ſhake him and his hopes, before Death and Judgment doth it. O that I could but perſwade him to maintain a jealouſie over himſelf, and to ſearch and try his heart, and to bring himſelf to the touch-ſtone, and not to be ſatisfied, till he findes that he hath got more than ever any Hypocrite yet had, or can have. The beſt of God's Children are moſt ſuſpicious of themſelves, and afraid of their own deceitful hearts. Do but ſee how *David* carrieth it, in *Pſal.* 139. What is his great requeſt, that he muſt have granted, or he can't be ſatisfied; Is it not that God would deliver him from miſtakes in matters of everlaſting conſequence? ſo *Pſal.* 119. 80. Pardon this tediouſneſs upon theſe things, if moſt of the Profeſſors of the World did not ſplit upon

theſe

theſe Rocks, I ſhould paſs theſe things over with ſilence.

Fourthly, *All that die quietly, are not happy after Death.* It's no unuſual thing for the wicked to carry their falſe peace with them to the Grave. I have heard indeed many poor People boaſting of their deceaſed Friends, and pleaſing themſelves, to think how happy they were, *Becauſe they dyed like Lambs.* (to uſe their own expreſſion.) Alas, alas, how many thouſands are there that die like Lambs, that are but Swine, and have the Devil's Brand upon their Foreheads! It's a dangerous arguing from Peoples carriage upon a Death-bed, what their ſtate is in another World; ſuch is the hardneſs of Mens hearts, ſo dreadful the ſearedneſs of their Conſciences, and ſo great the ſubtilty of Satan, that many are carried very quietly to Hell, and fear nothing till they feel; and are not brought to their ſenſes, till unſpeakable horro and anguiſh doth it: And on the other ſide, how many of the precious Sons of *Zion* have ſet in a Cloud? How many of the dear Children of God may go out of the World thorow a painful Death? Are not their Intellectuals ſometimes impaired, their reaſon Clouded, and their Bodies upon the Rack? and yet in a Moment they feel themſelves ſwallowed up of that glory, and the doleful antecedents of their happineſs did but make their reſt more ſweet, and welcome, and put an accent upon their bliſs. The truth of it is, it hath not a little puzled ſome, as well as *David*, to conſtrue God's diſpenſations, to ſee the wicked die quietly, *Pſal.* 73. 4. and

the godly to have a ſtrange Death; but God will ſhortly reſolve this Riddle: and I think it were no very difficult thing for a ſerious underſtanding Man, to give himſelf conſiderable ſatisfaction in this buſineſs. May not the wicked die quietly, becauſe his Conſcience is quite ſeared, and he may perſwade himſelf that he hath made an agreement with Death and Hell? may he not hope that there is no ſuch place as Hell; or if there is, that it is tolerable? may he not make himſelf believe, that the Word of God is not true, and inviſibles are all but fanfies? or that God is ſo merciful, as that he will not damn him? and many ſuch things the Devil helps his Servants with, that ſo his ſervice may not be diſparaged, and that he may have the better advantage to tempt others. There is much alſo in the nature of the Diſeaſe; and it may be God may try his own Children with acute pains, and let Sathan buffet them, to manifeſt the excellency of his Power, and their Grace, to try others of his Children, whether for all this they will ſerve him; and ſome Perſons of admirable attainments, and great experiences, while in health may have ſome conſiderable Trials upon a death-bed, that poor Chriſtians (which were ready to fear, becauſe they had not their enjoyments, that therefore they had nothing at all) might ſee that great Saints have their Tryals, as well as they; but I ſhall be far briefer in other things.

I come now to ſhew you who they are, that are bleſſed at their Death, and to give them a brief Deſcription of thoſe which dye in the Lord.

First,

First, *They are such, who are made thorowly to understand, that they were sometimes quite dead in sins and trespasses, that they were Aliens from the Common-wealth of Israel, and strangers to the Covenant of Grace.*

Secondly, *They are Persons which are convinced of that misery of such a state*, and made to know, that if they dye in their sins, they must be buried in Flames.

Thirdly, *Upon This they are out of love with their most beloved sins*, and count that which was their life, joy, and pleasure, to be a very Death misery, and Hell, whereupon they set themselves in good earnest against sin, as the greatest evil in the World; they believe now, *That if they live after the Flesh they shall dye, but if through the Spirit they mortifie the deeds of the Flesh, they shall live.* Upon this account, they use all the means that they can to get their corruptions weakned, an inward Principle, Divine Life: Now he begins to act them, which is as contrary to Sin, as Heaven to Hell, a Spirit of ingenuity restrains them, *How shall they do this, and sin against God?* They now see sin in its colours, as it is contrary to the best good, God; they can see its killing and damning Nature, in the Agonies and Sufferings of Christ, and they feel the doleful effects of sin in their Soul and Body; both, and upon this account they can say, what have I to do with Vanity any more, Shall I still hug this Serpent? Shall I still Sail with this *Jonah* in my Vessel? and shall I after all this keep this Dalilah in my Bosom? No; but, O that I could hate it Ten Thousand times more than I

do. There is an enmity raiſed in the Soul againſt ſin, which can't be ſatisfied, till it ſee the Death of Sin; now this is a Perſon that is fit for death, and Death, it will (as you ſhall hear afterwards) do him a World of kindneſs in ſhewing him the Heads of all his Enemies.

4. *An other quality of this Perſon, which is like to make ſuch a bleſſed end, is this, he is one that is dead to the World.* Faith hath diſcovered a better Country to him, it hath ſpyed that new *Jeruſalem*, and thoſe bleſſed Regions: and now the Soul thinks the World ſcarce worthy of a ſerious thought, or look; he takes himſelf to be a kind of Priſoner here, and the whole World but a Dungeon, if compared with that ſtate of liberty and glory; he now joyns with *David*, and ſays, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none upon Earth that I can deſire beſide thee.* This is the Man that is like to be a gainer by Death; He who contemns Earth, and makes Heaven his choice, ſhall never finde himſelf a loſer.

5. *Another property of the Man which ſhall be bleſſed at Death, is this, he is one that takes Chriſt for life and happineſs.* Time was indeed, he was of an other mind, ſin was his delight, and none ſo deſpicable in his Eye, as Chriſt; but God, in free and rich grace, hath taken away the Scales from his Eyes, and healed him of his miſerable blindneſs, and let him ſee ſuch a lovelineſs in the Lord Chriſt, as that now he is able to ſay, none but Chriſt, none but Chriſt; *He is altogether lovely.* He is now quite out of love with himſelf, neither his righteouſneſs, nor any thing

is lovely now, but Christ; and will not that Soul be blessed, when it comes to have its desires accomplished? he that counts nothing worth the having, except Christ, and for Christ, can't be miserable, when he is lodged safe in his imbraces.

6. *He that makes it his business to live to Christ, to him to dye shall be gain.* God is often-times better, but never worse than his word: And hath he not made many promises to them that diligently seek him? Hath he not said that their labours shall not be in vain in the Lord? The Christian is running, and he shall at last obtain the Prize, the Crown he fights for, he shall have; fear not Christian, quit thy self bravely, win it and wear it; what though it be wrapped up in Cypress? its beauty shall not be Vailed long. What though Death with his cold and dirty hand set it upon thy head? it will sit as neat, and as fast, as an Almighty hand can make it. What though the Vessel be tost and broke? it shall come safe with its rich lading, to the desired Harbour. Condemn not, O you foolish World these spiritual Merchants, till you know what their returns are, when their burden is deliver'd; but imitate them, till you can finde a more glorious Prize, than Heaven, a better happiness than God can give, and a Kingdom that will last longer, than Eternity; *Psal.* 63. 8. *Psal* 90. 14.

7. *They which are willing (if called to it) to do, or suffer any thing for Christ, shall inherit this blessedness.* He that is willing to dye for Christ, shall live as long as Christ lives, in happiness,

and reſt: 'tis not for nothing that *Paul* makes no great matter of bonds, ſcorns at threatnings, and triumpheth in danger; the finiſhing his courſe with joy makes all go down ſweetly, *Acts* 20. 24. The Primitive Chriſtians were no Stoicks, and yet with what patience, gratitude, and joy, did they ſuffer, what the malice, and wit of Men, and Devils could inflict? and now they enjoy the fruit of their labours, the ſalvation of their Souls, and that is not all, but they receive their Palms, Robes and Crowns, yea more peculiar badges of God's Champions; *Loe, thus ſhall it be done to the Perſons, whom the Lord delighteth to honour*! This 'tis to be impriſoned, baniſhed, or dye for Chriſt. Rejoyce, O ye ſuffering Saints, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven! to you it is given, not only to believe, but alſo to ſuffer; this Fire is but to purifie, and to make you Veſſels more fit for your Maſters uſe, this dirt caſt upon you, is but to ſcower and make you more clean; this knocking, rubbing, and hewing, is but to furbiſh and poliſh you, that you may be more ſtately Pillars, in the Temple of your God. Fear not Men, nor Devils: the greateſt hurt that they do you, is to fill your Sails, and to bring you more ſpeedily to your Port.

8. *They which long for the coming of Chriſt, and their being with him, that can ſay, I have waited for thy ſalvation; O God, now let thy ſervant depart in peace:* In a word, that can bear their abſence from Chriſt, only upon thoſe terms, that they may bring honour to him in this life, and perſwade Souls to be in love with him,

him, and may be inſtrumental for the ſetting up his Kingdom, ſhaking the Kingdom of Sathan, and weakning the intereſt of Hell in the world. Theſe, O theſe are your brave Souls, that are out of Gun-ſhot: Death can never ſurprize them, they ſtand always with their Loines girt, and their Lamps burning. And if the Bridegroom ſhould make the Mountains to quake, with the ratling of his Chariots, and the Hills to tremble at the preſence of his Majeſty, and the Heavens themſelves to ſhrivel into nothing, by the glory of his coming, yet they, (O bleſſed Souls!) and they only would break forth into a Song of Triumph, and Eternal Hallelujahs; Who would not be a Saint? ſure none, but a mad-man, or a fool: Do the World underſtand what theſe things mean! Do they indeed believe how much the higheſt of them all, are below the meaneſt, and loweſt Childe of God? Thus I have ſhown you who are the ſubjects of this bleſſedneſs. I know I forget time, but it goes well, may you and I get but this bleſſedneſs ſecured, and ſpend a happy Eternity.

The Second thing that I propoſed to ſpeak to, was to prove, that ſuch as theſe are (in ſpight of Hell) ſhall be bleſſed; and becauſe in the foregoing Diſcourſe, this hath been touched upon, I ſhall but very briefly run over theſe things.

Firſt, *God ſaith, they ſhall be bleſſed, and therefore they ſhall*; when the great Perſecutors have been hunting for their Prey, and hope to roaſt what they have got, and feed themſelves with

with the hopes of the content and pleaſure, that they ſhall enjoy; nay, when they ſhall beg with tears for the bleſſing, they ſhall be fruſtrated, denyed, curſed, and hear that heart-rending reply, they have gotten the bleſſing before you came, 'tis now too late, yea, and they ſhall be bleſſed. Might I not heap up a World of promiſes, the leaſt of which clear a Saints title to this bleſſed inheritance? Time would fail me, if I ſhould but read one in Forty; what is the meaning of that, *Eſ.*57.2. *Phil.*1.21. 2 *Cor.* 5.1. *Job* 3.17.

2. *They feel ſomewhat of this happineſs in this World, therefore they ſhall have it compleated in another.* How oft do the Saints feel their Souls tranſported with the ſenſe of divine pleaſures? How many earneſts do they receive of the purchaſed poſſeſſions? How many warm refreſhing Raies of Divine love break in upon their Soul, ſo that they would not exchange one Hours comfort for all the joys that ever the wicked enjoyed, could they all be united in one, and their duration be Eternal? Have I not with much comfort ſeen ſome of thoſe triumphing Saints rejoycing, when others would have mourned? Have I not heard them talk of their ſweet experiences, the very mention of which, is more reviving to a ſpiritual hearer, than the higheſt pleaſures that the ſenſualiſt is capable of. Sometimes in Prayer their ſouls even get into the boſom of God, and the great God and Man have a bleſſed intercourſe, the Soul lets out it ſelf to God, and God lets out his love to the Soul. Sometimes in a meditation the Heart is glowing,

ing, and the Fire burns, and ere it is aware, it is lifted above the World, yea, and above it self too: What else is this, but the clear demonstration of the reality of invisibles? Can meer fancies thus transport Men? Must they not believe their own experiences? Can that joy, which is the result of faith and love, and comes in from the promises; and that in a way of duty, and close walking with God, Can that be a delusion? Will the Spirit of truth witness to a lye? Will goodness it self put a cheat upon poor Creatures, and that in a matter of such vast consequence, as Eternity? Can we conceive, that he which commands us not to deceive our Neighbour, should deceive us? Shall any that calls himself a Christian, entertain such blasphemous apprehensions of the blessed *Jehovah*? Well then, if it be so, that Children of God love solid and unexpressible joys, many times even on this side glory; Doth not this then prove, that hereafter they shall be happy, and that beyond the apprehensions of Men, and Tongue of Angels? For the Saint in his greatest dimensions, fullest enjoyments, and tallest stature on this side the Grave, is but a Childe, a Dwarf, a Worm, in comparison of what he will be, the next moment after his dissolution: For the proof of this, you may read over these, and other Scriptures, *Psal.*16.11. *Psal.*42.5. *Luk.* 16.22. 2 *Cor.*4.7. *Revel.*13.14.

3. *May I not bring in the wicked themselves, as witnesses of the Saints happiness, and their own misery*, the Saints wisdom, and their folly? what else is the meaning of *Balaam's* wish? Why should

ſhould he be ſo deſirous to dye the death of the Saint, and to have his latter end like his, if he were not thorowly convinced of this, that holineſs were no madneſs, piety no fancy, and religion no deluſion? What is it that makes thoſe in *Mat.* 26, 8. to cry out ſo importunately; Give us of your Oyl, for our Lamps are gone out. I am perſwaded, that all the Reprobates in Hell, will one Day juſtifie the Children of God for their ſerioufneſs, and wiſh a thouſand times, that they had had their ſcorns, loſſes, torments: It is no unuſual thing for them, which have to do with dying Perſons, to hear them crying out with anguiſh, when their time is ſpent, and their ſands are run out, O you are happy, O that I were but in the condition of the pooreſt, and miſerableſt Saint upon Earth. O that I had but prayed with fervency, heard with ſerioufneſs, and minded my Soul in good earneſt! Happy are they that have not all their work to do in a dying Hour, O happy are they that have ſome Cordial to comfort them in a time of ſuch diſtreſs, O, a Chriſt, a Chriſt, ten thouſand Worlds now for that Chriſt, which I deſpiſed! Theſe are things we are acquainted with. Well then, our Enemies themſelves being Judges, an *Iſraelite* indeed is a Perſon of true worth, and without controverſie, his eſtate is, and ſhall be comfortable, bleſſed and glorious.

4. *How great are the abſurdities, that elſe would follow?* VVould not the Devil boaſt that he hath done more for his followers, than Chriſt hath done for his? VVould it not follow that Saints

Saints are the most miserable fools in the world? then it would be to no purpose to deny ones self, to fight with Beasts at *Ephesus*, to bear the contradiction of sinners: then Christ dyed for nothing, or hath done his work by the halves; then there is no credit to be given to the Bible, God is worse than his word, and the Scripture promises are false; then *Paul*'s confidence was madness, and his boasting made void; then all preaching is a cheat, and the Ministers of Christ are Impostors, and the wicked are in the right: then *David* would have better reason to say, he hath cleansed his hands in vain, and that his frequent devotions were to no purpose, and his Songs at Mid-night, but the dotages of an extravagant fansie, and Hours which were spent in Prayer and Meditation, were purely lost. VVhat saist thou to this, O Christian? would not this be sad news indeed, if all thy hopes should come to this? But be of good cheer, this is the doctrin which the Devil and his Ministers do preach; as long as God is true you shall not be deceived, as long as he is happy you shall not be miserable, and till Hell hath got above Heaven, you are well enough. Go on therefore resolutely, and let nothing daunt thee, 'tis but yet a little while, and you shall see all this, and more than this a thousand times made good to thee. Fear not, 'tis God who hath spoken it, and he commanded his Servant *John* to write, and leave it upon Record. *That they which dye in the Lord are blessed, and they shall rest from their Labours, and their Works do follow them.*

3. The

3. The next thing which I promiſed to ſpeak to, was, to ſhew wherein the bleſſedneſs of departed Saints doth conſiſt; But what work am I now about? Who is ſufficient for theſe things? What Tongue can utter the leaſt part of that Glory? What Heart can imagine its tranſcendent excellency? And what Ears can bear it? Should ſuch a one as *Moſes*, *Enoch*, or *Elias* come ſparkling in his Robes, in the habit of a glorified Saint, and ſhould he but tell you what a ſight he hath ſeen, what melody he hears, what imployment he is engaged in, what poſſeſſions he enjoys, Where would he endure it? I am perſwaded, if in this mortal ſtate, God ſhould let in the Soul the hundreth thouſandth part of that Glory, which Saints enjoy in Heaven, it would in a moment ſink a Man, and make ſuch Bodies as ours now are wither to duſt. I have ſeen a great many fine things in my time, I have heard of more, but I can eaſily imagine more than ever all the Princes of the Earth, in their greateſt ſplendour enjoyed; and yet here I am at a loſs, and no wonder: For it is beyond the reach of Saints and Angels in Heaven fully to conceive what their own happineſs is, and I believe it is no ſmall part of their joy, that they ſerve a Maſter, who loveth to out-do, not only deſerts and expectations, but even the imaginations of his Creatures. How then can ſuch a poor Woman as I am, mannage ſuch a work as this is? becauſe I can't ſay all, muſt *I* ſay nothing, and paſs this over with ſilence and admiration? becauſe this is a great deep, which our Plummet can't fathom, an Ocean that hath no

ſhoar,

ſhoar, ſhall we therefore never ſail in it? God forbid. O may it be my work in time, and to Eternity to praiſe that infinite, boundleſs excellency that is in my God. Though theſe are matters, which one would think ſhould command attention and affection both, yet if we conſult the lives of all, yea the higheſt experiences of the beſt, notwithſtanding theſe things are ſo frequently inculcated, and ſo paſſionately recommended to our conſideration, yet where is the Man or Woman to be found, that lies under the lively impreſſions of theſe things: And therefore I ſhall think it not impertinent, if I dwell upon that an Hour, which will be the ſubject of your Meditation, and Foundation of your comfort, if ever you underſtand what Chriſtianity in the life of it means. This only by the by, a little to quicken your attention. I come now to my buſineſs, to ſhew you wherein the Saints happineſs after death conſiſts.

1. It conſiſts in a full everlaſting freedom from evil, or any imperfection.

2. It conſiſts in a compleat, perfect, and Eternal enjoyment of all the good that our natures are capable of.

First, *It conſiſts in a full and everlaſting freedom from evil, or any imperfection.* And here I ſhall inſiſt upon ſome of thoſe evils and imperfections, which a Child of God ſhall be freed from, as ſoon as ever Death hath let the Soul out of the Body.

First, *The Saint is free from all ſin.* The Bolts ſhall be knockt off, the Priſon walls broke down, and the poor Captive ſet at liberty. O

bleſſed

bleſſed Jubilee! How glad would *Paul* have been, if when he cryed out in ſuch an Agony: O wretched Man, who ſhall deliver me? if he had heard a Voice from Heaven, ſaying, thy groans have pierced the Clouds, thy Prayer hath reached the Heavens, thy Petitions ſhall be granted immediately, would not this have been grateful news? When before a few days be at an end, this ſhall be the condition of every one of God's People. Now indeed if you liſten to their Cloſets, you ſhould hear how dolefully they bemoan their condition, if you follow them into their Families, What is it that they would moſt deſire of God? is it not freedom from ſin? What complaints do they make of themſelves, that there ſhould be ſo great an unſutableneſs in them to God, that their hearts are unſenſible of the worth of divine things, that they ſhould have ſo little love to the Lord Chriſt, and be ſo little taken with the kindneſs of the Redeemer; how weak and faint, how cold and dull in duty? how ready to betray their Lord, how cowardly in the cauſe of God? But Death will for ever ſilence theſe complaints, death tares off *Joſhua*'s rags and preſents him before the Lord without ſpot or wrinckle; or any ſuch thing; ſin indeed accompanieth the ungodly into another world, he reſts from his pleaſures, and his wicked works follow him: but it is far otherwiſe with the godly, Sin was his burden, and Death ſhall unload him; ſin ſhall be confined to Hell, Heaven entertains no ſuch deformity: This Tyrant ſhall no more inſlave any of Chriſts ſubjects. The houſe of *Saul*, and the houſe of *David* ſhall no longer con-

contend, that bloody conflict between the flesh and spirit shall then be determined by a final victory, then the Soul will say, farewell my hard heart, farewel unbelief, farewel ingratitude; then thou shalt never entertain an unkind thought of God more; the lame and the blind, and the *Jebusites* shal be smitten when King *David* comes to make his Palace in *Zion*, thy sins must dye when the Lord cometh to take the full possession of this Fort: Royal confession of sin shall shortly be needless; no darkness shall cloud the understanding, no perverseness the will, no disorderliness in the affections, no treachery in the memory; the Eyes shall be better employed than in beholding of Vanity, the Eares shall not be locked against truth, the Hands far from violence, the Tongue from deceit, and the Feet from walking in ways of wickedness. And seems this a light matter to you who have gone bowed all your days under the pressure of sin; is it nothing to you to have all your iniquities done away as a Cloud, and your transgressions as a thick Cloud? Thus see what a kindness that formidable enemy doth to all the subjects of *Christ's* Kingdom; what prayers, tears, and groans did gradually, it doth at one blow. Thus the oppressed is delivered, the mourner made to rejoyce, and the great make-bate between God and the Soul, for ever discarded, and turned out of Doors. *Eph.*5 27. *Es.*44.22.

2. *When a Christian dyeth, he shall be freed from all the temptations of Sathan.* Death sets the Soul out of the Devils reach; this Angel hath nothing to do in Heaven, this Serpent shall

not come into the higher Paradiſe, nor Sathan creep into this *Eden*: Now indeed he goes up and down like a roaring Lyon, ſeeking whom he may devour, now he ſets his Ginnes every where to catch the unwary Chriſtian: he uſeth his ſtratagems to ſurprize them, but then this adverſary ſhall be trod under Foot, his Fiery Darts ſhall be quenched, and his deſigns broken. O happy Day, When will it come? when the Devil ſhall be as unlikely to tempt, as our hearts to cloſe: when we are got once ſafe to reſt, the Devil ſhall as eaſily ſhake God's Throne, as our happineſs. Death turns the Key, Bolts and Bars this Eenemy out; then, O then thou ſhalt ſee this *Pharaoh* caſt dead on the ſhore, and for ever diſabled from making any reſiſtance againſt thee, or in the leaſt diſturbing thy peace. *Rev.* 20. 10.

3. *The bleſſedneſs of the People of God conſiſteth in their being freed from the frownes and flatteries of the World.* In life time thou art fain to fight thy way to peace, to diſpute every ſtep thou goeſt, and canſt never have a quiet Hour while thou haſt ſuch ill neighbours: There is an old quarrel between the ſeed of the Woman, and the Serpent, and the enmity is radicated, and the feud can be cool'd with nothing but death. Chriſtian, expect not as long as any of that *Caniſh* Generation breath, that thou ſhould'ſt be long ſecure; In the world you ſhall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, Chriſt hath overcome the World, *Joh.* 16. 33. What though they ſpeak great words, Priſon, Halters Faggot? Thou ſhalt ere long ride in ſtate to glory, and then let them do their worſt: When thou art in Heaven, they

may

may curſe and increaſe their own miſery, but they ſhal not in the leſt diminiſh thy tranquility. And as for their flatteries, they ſhall ſignifie nothing, the beauty of this inferiour World will be darkned by the brightneſs of that light which Death leads thee into; its excellencies will be quite eclipſed, its allurements will loſe their power. Who can chooſe but contemn the Earth, that knows what Heaven meaneth? O how low an eſteem have the moſt experienced men hereof the World! Honours and riches are accounted very inconſiderable things to them which underſtand the difference between finite and infinite, the diſproportion between Time and Eternity; Death bloweth the duſt out of our eyes, it plucks off the Vail, and ſhews one quickly the glory of both Worlds: and ſo it is not left long to determine, which is to be preferred, droſs or ſilver, braſs or gold, a dunghil or a Palace: there will be no thought of returning to *Egypt*, or *Goſhen*, either in them which know the fruitfulneſs of the ſpiritual *Canaan*, the accomodations of the new *Jeruſalem*, the pleaſure of the holy Court.

4. *At Death he ſhall reſt from all his pains; there is no fear of ſickneſs, ſorrowes, and aches.* The Stone, Gout, and Plague are Diſtempers that none labour with there: that Aire is clear, and ſin which infecteth other places, never got footing there; they that ſcarce know what a Days eaſe now means, ſhall then forget their ſorrow, their Conſtitutions ſhall be mended, their crazy Bodies, that needed to be propped up by Art, have now no need of ſuch helps: the lame ſhall leap, the blinde ſee, the weak ſhall be ſtrong, the

crooked ſtrait, they which were in *deaths* oft ſhal be never in danger. O happy alteration! the Grave will refine and alter our Bodies, and they ſhall there bury all imperfections, and this mortal ſhall put on immortality, and this corruptible incorruption. There the weary ſhall be at reſt. *Eſa.*61.3. *&* 33.24. *&* 60. 18. *Job* 3.17.

5. *The bleſſedneſs of the deceaſed Saints conſiſteth in their perfect freedome from all wants, and fear of want.* Here they have their daily want, and in the ſweat of their brows they muſt eat their Bread. The World in its beſt eſtate is made up of vanities and troubles. How much need have we of the help of our fellow-creatures? we can't live without the uſe of their bodies and lives: we want their ſervice to till our Grounds, and to carry our weak Bodyes, that can ſometimes ſcarce go under their own burden. What ſhift could we make, if the influences of the Sun Moon and Stars were ſuſpended? what lamentable complaint ſhould we make, if God ſhould ſeal up the Fountains of water? how ſoon ſhould we faint, if he ſhould make the Heavens as Iron, and the Earth as Braſs? What Element can we want, what Creature could we well ſpare? But the time is coming, that Day will ſhortly begin, whoſe brightneſs will make the Sun dark, and the Moon to diſappear, and all the Stars to leave their Spheres as uſeleſs. O unbelief, how miſerably doſt thou rob us of the *comforts*, which the very fore-thoughts of that hour might bring in! Dwell O my trembling ſoul upon the Meditation of theſe things. Is there no truth nor weight in thoſe Scriptures? *Eſ.*60.19. *Eſ.*21.29. Give in thy

Anſwer.

Anſwer. *Why then art thou caſt down O my ſoul, and why art thou diſquieted within me?* Wait upon the Lord, and be of good courage, wait I ſay upon the Lord.

6. *This happy Man ſhall be quite freed of whatſoever may argue an imperfect ſtate.* Some of thoſe very graces that are now ſo uſeful and neceſſary, when their work is done, ſhall be laid aſide as uſeleſs, I mean Faith, Hope, Patience, deſire; all which ſpeak ſomething of imperfection ſhall then be ſwallowed up of love. They now help to lead the ſoul out of *Egypt*, conduct thorow the red Sea, and Wilderneſs, and ſend ſpices into *Canaan*, and bring good tidings out of that Land, they ſee *Sihon*, *Og*, and *Amaleck* diſcomfitted, and their Power broken, they go to the Borders of the promiſed Land: nay, they get up to *Piſga*, and upon Mount *Nebo*, there they bid the ſoul farewel. Faith, like a skilful Pilot, keeps cloſe to the *Ship*, till it ſee it out of danger. Faith, like loyal *Barzillai*, brings in abundant proviſions for the ſoul, in all its ſtreights, and comes with it to the banks of *Jordan*, to the brink of *eternity*; but there, there it takes its final leave, & ſends over yong *Chimham* to wait upon the King at *Jeruſalem*, it ſends love over into Heaven to dwell there with the Lord for ever. O bleſſed ſtate, when faith ſhall be ſwallowed up of ſight! Here we live by faith, and not by ſenſe or ſight, in glory we ſhall live by ſenſe and ſight, and not by faith. The ſhaddow ſhall vaniſh when the ſubſtance is come; hope, patience, deſire, and fear ſhall all paſs away, and be ſwallowed up with an eternal fruition, poſſeſſion, and ſecurity. Happy

are the People that are in such a case, their clouds are quite blown over, they need neither Wind or Sails, now they are safe landed. What think you now of a Child of God, Is it worth the while to be religious, is holiness a folly now? and yet this is not all, come a little further, and I will shew you greater things still. All this is but the privative part of their happiness, I come now to touch a little upon the positive part; but what an Ocean am I now lanching into, who can tell all the Priviledges of a Citizen of *Zion*, what Pen can describe the honour and dignities of the Sons of God? But that I may heighten your spirits, and a little antedate your comforts, I shall in the next place shew something of the positive part.

2. The blessedness of those which dye in the Lord, consists positively,

First in this, that they shall enter into the Society of the Angels, they shall leave any longer conversing with mortals, and, instead of weeping friends, see themselves compassed with singing Angels. How do you think that *Lazarus* was affected, who instead of Beggars, Crippels, and Dogs, had a Guard of Angels waiting upon him? What an extasy of joy was he surprized with, *Luk.* 16. 22. This honour have all the Saints. We think the sight of a King, the look of a Prince, the company of a Lord a great matter: what are they, if compared with the least of the Captains of the Lord's Host? How vast is the difference between Flesh and Spirit? and yet this favour the Lord is pleased to confer upon the least of his Children. And how glad are the Angels

gels themſelves of the ſociety of the pooreſt Saint? they are glad even here to be doing offices of love for them, many a danger they delivered them from, many a mercy they conveyed from their Father to them, but theſe Earthly Bodies were ſcarce capable of communications with ſuch noble and ſpiritual Creatures, but at Death they ſhall know their old friends and fellow-ſervants, and bleſs God with them, and for them for ever. *Heb* 12. 22. And theſe Chariots and Horſemen of *Iſrael* ſhall carry up *Joſeph* to his Fathers Houſe, and there the Sons of God ſhall ſhout for joy. Time was, the ſight of an Angel would make a Saint tremble, but then it ſhall make them to triumph: and what ſtories will they tell them, of the providences of God toward them, and joyn with them in the high praiſes of his goodneſs and love? But all this is but little to what follows.

2. At Death, the ſouls of believers are made perfect in holineſs. How will they in a moment ſee themſelves as white as ſnow? how glorious ſhall the Kings Daughter be, when her beauty is perfect, how lovelily will ſhe look, when ſhe's clad with innocent purity, how excellent when her royal Husband the Lord *Chriſt* ſhall be infinitely taken with her? Will he not then ſay, thou art all fair my love, there is no ſpot in thee. Come with me from *Lebanon* my Spouſe, with me from *Lebanon*, from the top of *Amana*, from the top of *Shenir* and *Hermon*, from the Lyons Dens, from the Mountains of Leopards. Thou haſt raviſhed my heart, my Siſter, my Spouſe, thou haſt raviſhed my heart, with one of thine Eyes,

with one Chain of thy Neck: How fair is thy love, my Sister, my Spouse? &c. *Can.* 4. 7, 8. 9, 10. If the Lord see so much beauty here in his Church, what will he do hereafter, when he shall have wash'd away all her defilements, and taken out her stains, and have decked her with his Jewels, and put on her Wedding Garment? That Day is coming, O my soul! when will the shaddows flee away, when will Days and Nights be all at an end, when will time be spent, when shall the Curtain be drawn? O that, that's the place! thou shalt then love that precious Jesus, with a Seraphick and Angel-like love, thou wilt then as much delight and rejoyce in him, as *Abraham*, *David*, and *Paul* did. Thy drowsie soul shall be as nimble and active in the service of thy great Maker, as *Enoch* and *Elias*; thou shalt praise him Day and Night, and be no more weary than the Angels themselves: thou shalt perfectly understand the will of God, and readily obey it: thou shalt be holy as God is holy: And what would you now give for such a frame? how glad would you be to feel a connaturality to divine imployments, how happy would you think your selves, if your heart were always as God would have it? Is it not for this, that you fast and pray? Is it not for this, that you hear, read, and meditate? Is not this the end of Sacraments? Well, be of good cheer, in Mount *Zion* there shall be deliverance and holiness: *Obed.* 17. And is all this nothing, seemeth it still a small priviledge to be a Child of God, and like our Father? who that understands this would not bid Death welcome, and say now

Grave

Grave do thy worſt? Ask *Paul*, and he will tell you, that upon this account he groans: enquire of *David*, and he will let you underſtand, that he never expects ſatisfaction, till he awake with God's likeneſs. *Pſal.* 17.

3. Another thing wherein the bleſſedneſs of a Chriſtian at Death lyes, is this, the ſight of Chriſt. What can be more deſired by a Child of God, than to behold and enjoy him, by whom all the mercies we have, and all that we expect, flow in to us, *Eph.* 1. 11. That good old Saint, *Luk.* 2. 30. thought it a Heaven upon Earth to ſee him, though his Majeſty was vailed, and the brightneſs of his glory wrapped up, and covered by his humanity, he doth ſing a Requiem to his Soul, and ſay, *Now let thy Servant depart in peace, for mine Eyes have ſeen thy Salvation.* How were *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, affected at his transfiguration, *Mat.* 17. 2. What an admirable frame doth the Spouſe ſeem to be in, when ſhe ſaw only the ſhadow and back-parts of this beloved one, *Cant.* 5. 16. She can't tell when to have done commending of him. But all this is but a ſmall thing, compared to the ſight which they ſhall ſee, when their graces ſhall be compleat, and their ſoul like him; and then ſhall they behold the King in his beauty, no longer the contempt and ſcorn of the World, no longer in poverty and want, no longer crucified and rejected; but Jeſus, the expreſs Image of his Father, and the brightneſs of his glory, accompanyed with Millions of Angels, all at his command, and yet for all this, caſting a gracious eye upon them; then ſhall the Soul behold him face to face, who

did,

did, and ſuffered ſuch wonderful things for it; 'twas he that came out of his Fathers boſome, 'twas he that ſtept out of his Throne, and put off his Robes, that came leaping over the Mountains and skipping over the Hills, running thorow a thouſand difficulties, that he might pluck thee out of thy miſery, and deliver thee out of the paw of the Lyon, and the Bear, that he might redeem thee from the power of Sin, Death, and Hell. How will the Heavens eccho with ſongs of joy, when the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, ſhall come to dwell with her Husband for ever? *Iſay* 33. 17. Chriſt is the deſire of Nations, the joy of Angels, the delight of the Father, and he in whom he is well pleaſed. What ſolace then muſt that ſoul be fill'd with, that hath the poſſeſſion of him to all Eternity; Is not his love better than wine, and a look of his countenance to be prefer'd before Corn and Oyl? Is not his kindneſs to be valued above life it ſelf? What meaneſt thou then O my ſoul, that thou doſt ſo dread his coming? Why art thou ſo loath to be with him? Why art thou afraid of the enjoyment of him? Will thy Redeemer make thee a ſlave, hath Heaven changed his Nature, and made him leſs deſirable? Will thy Saviour make thee miſerable? Awake then, O ye Saints, and ſtand a tip-toe, wait, watch and long till thou ſee him, who alone can fill thy ſoul! fight, ſtrive, and run, till you enjoy. One ſmile of his, one look of his love, is worth the pleaſures of ten worlds: where is thy heart, where are thy deſires, what's become of thy love? if Chriſt doth not affect, draw, and fire thee, what will? but when thou ſhalt ſee Chriſt indeed,

indeed, his very looks will ſo warm thy Soul, that thou ſhalt in a moment feel a divine flame, which ſhall never be extinguiſhed, as long as Chriſt, the object of thy love, ſhall live: the ſight of Chriſt will put new life into thy ſoul, and make thy love and joy freſh for ever; this is he, O my ſoul, that was wounded, that thou mighteſt be healed; this is he who was crowned with Thorns, that thou mighteſt be Crowned with Glory; this, this is he that dyed, that thou mighteſt live. Is not all the Glory of Heaven wrapped up in him? Are not the Treaſures of divine kindneſs, which were ſometimes hid in him, now opened? Tell me now, O my ſoul, is there any in two worlds comparable to him? Was not that he that ſheltered thee from the ſtorms of God's wrath? VVas not that precious Body, the *Shield* which blunted the *Sword* of Juſtice, and kept the Arrowes of the Almighty from doing dreadful execution upon thee, an Enemy, Traytor, and Rebel? VVas it not he that laid down the price that bought thy pardon, that purchaſed this Inheritance? was it not he that fed thee with his Body, that broached his heart blood, to quench the thirſt of thy ſoul, the luſts of thy heart, and the flames of God's indignation? Look upon him, is he not made up of love? I ſee now, it is not for nothing, that the Virgins did love him, it was not without good reaſon, that the *Spouſe* was ſick; it was not without very good cauſe, that the *Saints* did ſo long to be with Him; to be with him did I ſay? who that hears of him, can chooſe but wiſh to ſee Him, who that ſees him, can live with-

without him, who that lives with him can leave him? What mean the World? Sure they are dead, blind, or mad: but where am I now? This is a ſubject ſo ſweet, that I can't tell how to make an end; O that I might ſee, know, and enjoy! look dear Jeſus upon me, and let me go, and tell the World thy beauties, let me every day have a little ſight of thee, that I may commend thee a thouſand times more feelingly, and that I may command the affections of all that hear of thee, that nothing but thy love may ſerve their turns. Pardon me, that this admirable one hath drawn out my thoughts ſo largely. If you can but love after all this, and ſee him when you die with comfort, you will ſay, I were too ſhort in his praiſes, and too ſuperficial in his commendations, and that the half was not told you.

4. The bleſſedneſs of departed Saints lies in this, that they ſhall meet with all the Children of God, and have communion with the Spirits of the juſt, made perfect. Thou ſhalt then meet thy beſt friends, whoſe company was ſo warming, whoſe words were ſo incouraging, whoſe lives did ſo much command Religion, their Faces did then ſhine, their converſation was in Heaven: but O what an alteration there is in them for the better! their Souls are now like Chriſt, nothing but grace, love, and praiſe: no difference in judgment, no pride or paſſion, nothing that offends: And how will they welcome you to their Fathers Houſe, you that took ſweet counſel together, that went to the Houſe of God, that talk'd of that glory, how glad will you be, when you meet in it? Nay, death will bring you acquainted with

with all theſe famous Worthies, of whom the World was not worthy, the noble Champions of Chriſt, which thought not their lives dear to them, ſo they might but finiſh their courſe with joy: this Porter opens the Door, and lets the Saints ſoul into that Palace, where all the Favourites of that great Prince reſide; and thou ſhalt ſtand alſo with them upon Mount *Zion*, in the preſence of that mighty King, and ſhalt behold, and live in his glory for ever: And is all this inconſiderable? What would I give to ſee *Enoch*, that walked with God? How glad ſhould I be to be acquainted with *Elias*? how joyful, if I might have ſome diſcourſe with *Paul*? Would it not make one couragious in the cauſe of God, if one could hear *Daniel*, or the Three Children tell the ſtory of their deliverance? How ſhould one be pleaſed to have it from the Mouth of *Moſes*, *Joſhuah*, and *Caleb*, what God did for *Iſrael* in the Fields of *Ham*, the Red-Sea, and the Wilderneſs? and how he brought them into the Land of *Canaan*; how do you think you ſhould be affected at ſuch things as theſe? why? as formidable as Death looks, it's he that brings us to the ſpeech of all theſe. How loath are we now to part, when a knot of us have got together, to talk about the things of another World? are not the Saints the excellent ones, in whom is our delight? is not the empty diſcourſe of the unexperienced World tedious, and their Company a burden? Why? Heaven hath in it none but Saints, and Angels, and the bleſſed God. Is not that Company indeed? and all their work will be to admire, praiſe, and love God, and to take

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infinite delight, and complacency in him to all Eternity. O what acclamations of joy will there be, when all the Children of God ſhall meet together, without fear of being diſturbed by the Antichriſtian and *Caniſh* brood! when they meet and never part, but joyn in Hallelujahs for ever. That, that's the melody, when a Quire of ten thouſand times ten thouſand of Angels ſhall ſing an Eternal Song, and the hundred and forty and four thouſand, and that innumerable Company, out of all Nations Tongues, and Kindreds, ſhall anſwer, ſaying, *Bleſſing, honour, glory, and power, be unto Him that ſits upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.* Rev 5 13. Luk. 13. 28, 29. Heb. 11. 22. Eph. 2. 19.

5. An other thing, wherein the bleſſedneſs of the Saints departed conſiſts, is, that then all their Prayers ſhall be fully anſwered, their deſires ſatisfied, and hopes enjoyed. They now oft, with ſorrow, hear the reproaches of the wicked, who are ready to ask them, where is their God? what is become of their faſts, tears, and groans, to what purpoſe do they afflict themſelves? what profit is it for them to call upon God? what benefit is there in ſerving the Almighty? The wicked boaſt of their hearts deſire, and are ready to ſleight Religion, as a uſeleſs and contemptible thing. But is there not a time a coming, when the godly may ask them, what profit they have now in their pleaſures, what comfort in their greatneſs, What fruit of all their labours? and with unſpeakable ſatisfaction, produce their Crown, and ſay, This, this was the prize that we contended for; this was the reward that we had

had in our Eye, this was the glory and honour which we ſo highly valued; *This is our God in whom we have truſted,* Eſ. 25 9. The Saints ſhall then ſee, that it was not in vain to ſeek, knock, and wait; then they ſhall underſtand that nothing was loſt, which was ſpent for their ſouls and Heaven: they ſhall ſhortly know, that the pooreſt hearty groan was heard, the quickeſt ejaculations were not unobſerved, and that the weakeſt ſincere Prayers were able to pierce the Heavens. O who would not ſerve ſuch a Maſter, who can't forget any of his! nay, the Lord will infinitely out-do their requeſts, and give them more than their Tongues could ask, and minds conceive. This is the portion of them that ſeek thee, that ſeek thy face, O *Jacob.*

6. At Death, the Believer ſhall be poſſeſſed of God, and know what the beatifical viſion means: and if you would be better ſatisfied what this is, my requeſt is, that you would live holily, and go, and ſee. And if after a ſight and ſenſe of this incomprehenſible glory, you finde that I have deceived you, by making you to over-value it, I am contented to bear the blame of an Impoſtor. I am here but brief, becauſe I muſt confeſs my Meditations are now at a loſs, and ſilence, and aſtoniſhment muſt ſpeak the reſt.

7. That which is no ſmall addition to a Saints happineſs is this, that there is no fear of loſing of it; his Enemies can't rob him, for they are all ſafe enough, and his Treaſure is locked up there, where neither Moth, nor Ruſt can corrupt, nor Thieves break thorow, and ſteal; the Chriſtian may then rejoyce over his Enemy, and ſay,

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Who ſhall ſeparate me from the love of God? they that are ſafe in Heaven, need not to entertain any fears of loſing their Inheritance. If God that made Heaven, and brought them to it, can ſecure them, if Chriſt that bought it for them, can make good his purchaſe, if all challenges are laid aſide, they are well enough; thy houſe ſhal not be ſhaken, thy comforts are durable, and the leaſe of thy Inheritance runs parallel with the life of God, and muſt not expire till Eternity be ſpent. *Rom.* 8 33. *Heb.* 13. 5. *Iſ.* 54. 10. *Iſ.* 35. *laſt.*

8. The laſt thing that I ſhall mention, wherein the happineſs of the Dead, that die in the Lord, conſiſts, is in the full and joyful aſſurance of a glorious reſurrection, and acquittance at the day of Judgment. Their Bodies are the ſacred Temples wherein God did dwell, they are not therefore to be buried in forgetfulneſs, but ſhall be reſerved as Jewels in a Cabinet, and at the Reſurrection, they ſhall be furbuſhed, and ſet in Glory; the very Duſt of the Saints is precious, and thoſe very Members, that were aſſiſtant to the Soul, in the Worſhip of God, ſhall partake of its Glory; and upon this account, the People of God dye in faith, that their Bodies and Souls ſhall have a bleſſed Meeting; upon this account, Believers weep not at the Interment of their Chriſtian brethren, as thoſe which have no hope but the thoughts of a future meeting ſwallows up the grief of preſent parting; they underſtand that it would be a piece of unkindneſs to be grieved at their happineſs, and that it ſpeaks too much ſelf-love, and too great a disbelief of their

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unſeen glory, and too much deſire, that our wills ſhould be done before God's. What a deal of ſorrow would the ſound belief of the reality of inviſibles prevent? With what chearfulneſs might the dear Children of God part, when they think how certainly, and ſpeedily they ſhall ſee one another again, never to part more. If the Doctrin of the Reſurrection were but better underſtood, if the Grave were but looked upon, as a Chamber to reſt in, and if faith could but take Death to be but an undreſſing, to put on better raiment, how contentedly then ſhould we be unclothed, that we might be clothed with immortality: And why ſeems it a thing incredible that the Body ſhould riſe again? Is it a thing incredible, that he which made a World out of nothing, ſhould raiſe up our lifeleſs Duſt, and ſcattered Bones? Is any thing too hard for the Almighty? Was he put to it, when he made Man out of a lump of Clay? Is it beyond his power to raiſe Children to *Abraham* out of the very Stones? Can nothing be acted by an Omnipotent Agent, but it muſt firſt be forged in our brains? Shall God indeed come and bow to us, and wiſdom ask counſel of folly, how he ſhould manage his affairs? Doth not God every Day do as great wonders, as this? and hath not he given our faith very conſiderable helps in this matter? Doth not his yearly providences preach the truth of this Doctrin? What Farmer thinks his Seed loſt, when it's buried under the Clods, when the Winter hath diſrobed the Medowes, and covered them with a white Mantle, will you therefore conclude they ſhall never be dreſſed a-

gain with their Greens, and decked with their Flowers? but if all this ſignify nothing, what do you think of what God hath done already? was *Lazarus* his Reſurrection a cheat? and were the Evangeliſts miſtaken, which tell us of the riſing of many of the Saints, and that they went into the holy City? Is Chriſt ſtill in the Grave? and if theſe things be otherwiſe, why ſhould not that which hath been, be again? What? hath God leſs power than he had? Is his Arm weaker than it was? Is the Grave too ſtrong for him? And are the Doors of it ſo faſt locked, that his Key can't open them? Did Chriſt promiſe more than he could make good, when he ſaid, *I will raiſe them up at the laſt Day.* O unbelief! how doſt thou ſpoyl my comforts, and daunt my courage, truth can't lie, the Almighty can't be weak, God is ſtill like himſelf. And if the caſe be ſo, what's good condition is the dead Saint in? his life is hid with Chriſt, and when Chriſt, who is his life, ſhall appear, he alſo ſhall appear with him in Glory; And what kind of Body will this be? when it ſhall be like the glorious Body of *Chriſt*; perfect, active, immortal. Look up to the Sky, do you ſee how bright that Body is, which lightens the whole VVorld, how haſtily that Champion runs to finiſh his appointed courſe? why that cold and dead Body ſhall ere long be as glorious, as the Sun in its ſtrength, & as lively in its motions? How eaſily will it mount into the Air to meet the Lord in the Cloude? how actively will it paſs from one ſide of the Heavens to another, with as much expedition, as it ſhall deſire? how readily will it run at the command of its great

great Maſter, and keep pace with thoſe winged Meſſengers the Angels, they ſhall be no longer ſuch heavy, dull pieces of Clay, and bundles of Diſeaſes, but when they are called out of their Bed, they ſhall be refreſhed abundantly, and with joy meet their Souls, and be acted by them. O me thinks what kind of greeting will theſe two old Companions have, when they ſee one another in an other world; what ſtrange ſalutations will they give each other. VVill not the ſoul ſay to the body, where hadſt thou, O my friend, that glorious ſplendor? who clothed thee in ſo lovely a dreſs? how cameſt thou by that Majeſty and beauty? Art thou that Body which were wont to bear me company to the Houſe of God, Are thoſe the Eyes that wept ſo oft? Are thoſe the Feet which travelled ſo many Miles to hear the VVord. O excellent alteration! well, now you ſee that your pains was not altogether loſt, and as for me, I have beheld the glory of our royal Bridegroom, I have viewed his Chambers, and have lodged in his boſom, ever ſince you and I parted, and I have found that he hath made good all his promiſes to a tittle. I had no ſooner parted from thee, but he ſent his Angels for me, and they brought me with joy into his Pavilian, and there did I ſee him compoſed with Millions of ſuch Courtiers, and all our old Friends I ſaw there; and O ſuch joy, happineſs, and pleaſure is unſpeakable; but what ſound is that which I hear, Is it not the Voice of the Arch-Angel? we are commanded away; VVho is that, do you think, that rides in ſuch ſtate, with ſo great a Train

after him? who sits upon that Throne; hark, hark, he calls you, make haste, make haste away.——*Come you blessed of my Father, enter now into your Masters joy:* Dwell in the Mansions that I have prepared, possess the Inheritance that I have given you: You are mine, and I am yours, I have betrothed you to my self long since, and now the marriage Day is come, and I take you to be my Spouse for ever. Before my Father, and these my Servants, I take you to be my wedded Wife for ever: and I do now for ever acquit you from all offences, they shall never be remembred any more; I invest you with the same glory that I possess, I indow you with all the Riches of my Kingdom, I will remove whatsoever may offend you; look how your Enemies tremble, I have already vindicated you from all those false imputations, which their malice did cast upon you. I have silenced your accusers, and for ever stopped the Mouths of their great adversaries, and they shall immediately be removed out of their sight, and pay dearly for all their abuses. Justice, call those Prisoners to the Bar.——*Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* And now my beloved, the Cloud is quite gone; come now into my Arms, *I* will never frown more, come away my love, my Dove, my undefiled, and rejoyce in my love, you and I will never part more; what I have is yours. *I* am well pleased in my choice, my Father loves you, as *I* do; you shall be where *I* am, and have the same pleasures that *I* have, and live as

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I do to Eternity. *Amen, hallelujah, even ſo come Lord Jeſus, come quickly.* Mat. 26. 31, &c. John 17. 24. Rev. 21. 9, &c. 1 Cor. 15. 33. 54. Dan. 12. 2, 3. Mal. 3. 16, 17. Mal. 4. 1. 1 Theſ. 4. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. And is not this a ſufficient reward, for thoſe poor ſervices, which the believer doth perform, while he lives upon the Earth? *Is* there nothing in all this? Seemeth it to you a ſmall matter to be free from ſin? *Is it* no favour to be ſecured from Sathan? *Is* not that a deſirable place, wherein there is ſo much glory, that the World in its beſt dreſs, looks like a deform'd ugly thing to it? VVho would not be glad to have all Diſeaſes cured, pains removed, and wants ſupplied? VVill not that be a Day of comfort indeed? when Faith ſhall be ended in ſight, hope in enjoyment, deſire in a delightful and Eternal fruition? when patience ſhall have done all its work, when an everlaſting Jubilee ſhall put a period to all ſorrows? *Is* it no honour to be conveyed into Heaven by a Guard of Angels? Do you count it an inconſiderable favour to ſee King *Jeſus* in his Throne? Have you no deſire to be w th all your good friends, and to know all the Favourites of Heaven? wou'd you not reckon it a great mercy, to have all your Prayers anſwered to the full? Will there be no pleaſure in the beatifical Viſion? Would not all this be the more conſiderable, if it might laſt always? *Is* it no ſatisfaction to you, to know that your Body ſhall be raiſed, like Chriſt's Body? and that your Body and Soul ſhall be publickly acquitted, owned, and bleſſed before the great Court: and after this, live in the ſame glory

that Christ lives in: If all this be worth the having, then the departed Saint is no loser, and we may well say, *Blessed are the Dead which dye in the Lord.*

Thus I have shewed who are they which dye in the Lord; and proved that such are blessed, and shewed wherein their blessedness doth consist. I now come to make some Improvement of this Doctrin.

Use I.

First, By way of Information, that holiness is no such silly thing, as the World thinks it to be; Sure, if there be any thing in rest, happiness, and glory, then the Saint scarce deserved the imputation of Fanaticisme: They which have received their Wages, will say, that the service of God is not unprofitable, and they finde themselves to be no losers, though credit, estate, and blood were spent in the cause of Christ: Should you ask them, who, thorow many Tribulations, have entred into the Kingdom of Heaven? Whether they repent of their diligence for Heaven, whether God hath not paid them double for their self-denyal, losses, and kindnesses? Would they not cry out truly, God is good to *Israel*, how great is that Treasure, that is laid up for them that fear him? Never let any grutch to serve God cheerfully, for verily he is a rewarder of them which diligently seek him.

Use II.

If the Saint be so happy in another World, then let us all examine, whether we are in the number of those Persons, for whom such things

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are prepared. Consider first, that this is not like to be every Man's Portion, all Men and Women are not Kings and Queens, nor all the Sons of *Adam* Heirs of such an Inheritance; few run so as to obtain, few fight so as to conquer, and get the Field, few act, as if this blessedness were worth the minding; and let me tell you, Heaven is not got with a wet Finger, most do their work by the halves, and though the Spirit move them, the Word, Providences call them, the Ministers beseech them, yet all will not do; they will not be perswaded, but a few lazy wishes will do, as well as all the seriousness in the World, and thus they will put things to the venture, and count a hazard, in the matters of their Souls and Eternity, but a trivial thing: We can't for our lives get Men to be in good earnest, but they will bless themselves, though God curse them; and take it for granted, that all is well, when God knows they are in as sad a condition, as can well be imagined on this side of Damnation. We tell them that most mistake, and that mistake here is the most deplorable; and yet still Men are asleep; and what if this should be thy condition, O Sinner, that comest hither for fashion sake, and sits there very trim and cheary? VVhat sayst thou Man, art provided for Eternity? VVhat title hast thou to Glory? Dost thou know what it means to be convinced of Sin? VVas it ever made loathsome to thee? And canst thou say thou hatest it with a perfect hatred? and that not only as contrary to thee, and as it brings Hell, Misery, and Damnation with

it, but as it is contrary to God; abusing his goodness, hating his purity, dethroning his Majesty; hath sin ever looked you in the face besmeered with the blood of Christ? Were you ever made to understand your absolute need of Christ? Did you ever make a compleat resignation of your self to him? and hath it been your business to act for him? and have you felt any strength coming from him, enabling of you to bring forth fruit meet for repentance, and to dye unto sin, and to live unto righteousness? and yet after all this, have you looked upon your self as an unprofitable servant? what experience have you in these things? put this question home to thy conscience; say, am *I* acquainted with such things or no? Are these things Riddles to me, or do *I* know what they mean? well now, have you done as *I* bid you, and what saith conscience? is it altogether silent, or doth it put you off till another time? why, then speak again, and again, and ask it whether this be not a serious question, and a business of some importance: but because People for the most part trifle in this great business, I shall speak something by way of Lamentation and conviction.

Use III.

Is it so, that they are blessed that die in the *Lord*, then what a case are they in, which live and die out of Christ? if none but the friends and children of God be thus happy, what will become of them which are aliens from the Commonwealth of *Israel*, that live without God in the World? VVhere shall the wicked and ungodly appear?

appear? O what a lamentable condition are moſt of the VVorld in! if we could ſee all the dead Souls in this Congregation, what a ghaſtly ſight would it be, ſhould God ſtrike all them dead, which lye in their ſins, and know not Chriſt; it is to be feared, that the Aſſembly would be far thinner than it is? ſhould the Graves open, and the ſouls and Bones ſay to us, make haſt, make haſt, get up your ſouls dreſſed, for within three Days you muſt lie in this black and cold Chamber with us? How would this make moſt of our Faces to gather paleneſs, and our joynts ready to knock one againſt another? but what if another Voice ſhould ſecond it, and one ſhould come roaring out of Hell, wrapped about with Flames, and ſhould ſay, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, they that die in ſin muſt be buried in Hell, and if this very moment, you do not turn, you muſt take a place with us in thoſe torments, from which there is no redemption; VVould this move you? why ſirs, is there not as much reaſon that you ſhould believe God, as the damned? O what wonders are ſtupid ſinners! how unconcerned do they go up and down, as if it were a very eaſy thing to prepare for Death, and a needleſs thing to think of Eternity. O you that know a little, what the life and death of a ſoul is, come help us to mourn over our dead, Doth not the very Aire ſmell of the dead? Are not their numbers ſcarce to be computed? whole Families, Towns, Cities, and ſcarce one living ſoul amongſt them! O where, where is our pity? how can we bear to ſee ſo many millions

lions go to the Pit, and not beſtow one tear upon them? what's the matter, O my ſoul, that thou art no more compaſſionate? would *Heſter*, *Jeremiah*, *Paul*; nay, would the King and Princes of *Niniveh* have been no more troubled, if Souls had been in the ſame danger in their days, as they are in ours. But that I may a little move my ſelf and others; let me commune a little with you, you are yet in your ſenſes, and have the uſe of your underſtandings, and are not brutes nor ſtones; ſhall I have leave to reaſon the caſe a little with you? do you never uſe your reaſon? have you not a principle of ſelf-preſervation? do you never conſider whither you are going, while you make haſt to Hell? Do you never think of Heaven? and is it ſo frightful a place, that you ſhould be afraid of it? will it undo you to be ſaved? and is that bleſſedneſs, which I have ſet before you, ſo contemptible a thing, that you will not ſo much as give the thoughts of it one Hours entertainment in your ſoul? Can you be contented without it, and prefer your ſhort lived pleaſures before it? if the caſe be ſo, thank your ſelves, if you have your choice, blame not God, if he deny you that which you thought not worth the accepting: As for us Miniſters, we call God, Angels, and Men to witneſs, that we have told you of your danger, and if you will not take warning, who can help it; if we knew what in the World to do to prevent your ruine, God forbid but that we ſhould readily do it, but if after all your threatnings, perſwaſions, and intreaties, you will go on ſtill, why, your blood

be

be upon your own Souls; but though I ſpeak thus, I hope better things of many here preſent, and things that do accompany ſalvation. I ſhall ſpeak for your incouragement in the next Uſe.

Uſe IV.

Is it ſo, that they are bleſſed that dye in the Lord, why then ſhould the believer be ſo much afraid of Death? What though it be the King of terrors, Is it ſo to all? Have not ſome handled this Serpent without any fear? What have I been proving all this while? Is there not one word of ſenſe in all that hath been ſpoken? get but this ſecured that you are a Child of God, make but the King your friend, and then neither his Serjeant, nor his Porter will do you any hurt, except to arreſt your enemies, and to open the Gates of his Palace to you, and to admit you into his Preſence be counted an injury: who would be afraid of everlaſting reſt, why ſhould any one be ſo loth to have his diſeaſes healed, why ſhould we be ſo unwilling to receive that which we ſeem with much earneſtneſs to ask? Will the Priſoner chooſe always to live confined? will he fall in love with his Chains, or be angry with him that comes to knock off his ſhackles? Is the miſerable Captive afraid of his liberty? why do you hear, pray, and read? to what purpoſe do you ſtrive, watch, and hope? Is it all for that which you tremble to have; what report doth faith bring of another World? Doth it tell you that it is a Land of Darkneſs and ſorrow, or that it is a place of joy, pleaſure and happineſs? and what ſtill loath to depart? is this World the more deſirable of the two,

and

and are thy ſins and carnal Companions more lovely than Chriſt! If the caſe be ſo, then why doſt thou talk of believing? Is this your faith? the truth of it is, if this be thy caſe, thou haſt no great reaſon to be over deſirous of leaving this World, for I perceive thou haſt built thy Houſe here, and doſt not take Heaven for thy Reſt, but in caſe of abſolute neceſſity, thou thinkeſt it a more tolerable place than Hell and Torments. But thou art not the Perſon, that I have now to do with, I ſhall ſpeak a word or two to ſuch by and by: my errant it is to thee, O praying and believing Saint, I would fain hearten thee up a little, that thou may'ſt ſhew the World, that Heaven is not ſo ſorry a preferment, as that one ſhould hardly be perſwaded to accept of it, but that it is indeed what the Scriptures, Miniſters, and the Children of God ſay it is. O contradict not your profeſſion, and let the wicked ſee, that you have got ſomething in an other World, and that your happineſs begins there, where theirs ends. You work hard, and will you be afraid when Night comes to receive your wages, I hope you will not ſay that the Lord is a hard Maſter, and that his wages are not worth the receiving. Let the wicked tremble and the enemies of God fear, and let the workers of iniquity be afraid of their appearance before their Judge. But let not the faithful ſubject dread his King, the Wife her Husband, nor the Child his Father. I would fain argue my ſelf and others out of thoſe ſlaviſh fears. Conſider ſirs, that now death hath loſt its ſting, and the Grave its bitterneſs, and a *Saint* (if he will but

be

be as careful in keeping his watch, as he ought) may be able to ſpeak the ſame Language, as *Paul* did. *O Death where is thy Sting, O Grave where is thy Victory?* 1 Cor. 15. 55. And to me to live is Chriſt, and to dye is gain; *I deſire to be diſſolved and to be with Chriſt.* If Death were like to make a ſeparation between Chriſt and thee, I ſhould then be far from blaming theſe thy fears but I ſhould rather wonder, that they are not a thouſand times greater. But me-thinks a Soul that hath had many a ſweet kiſs from Chriſt, that underſtands what he is worth, and that hath ſome good reaſon to ſay, my beloved is mine, and I am his, me thinks (I ſay) ſuch a one ſhould not deſire, that the Day of Marriage ſhould be protracted. Sure, were this but cleared, it were nothing to dye, but life it ſelf would be as conſiderable an exerciſe of patience, as any thing in the World; let me therefore again expoſtulate the caſe with thee, and do what I can to ſhake off thoſe unwarrantable fears. What is it that you are ſo much afraid of? Is it of pains? why, when you are dead, you will feel none, they be the living which feel pains, and I believe there are few living, but at one time or other feel as much pain as ſome do in their death; and if their pains be acute, they are like to be ſhort, and if they be not acute, they may be the more eaſily born. Are you loath to leave your friends, I hope God's Saints, & Angels are other gueſs friends than any you have here. You have a fine Houſe, and ſweet conveniences, alas, 'tis but a Hog-ſty, or a Dunghil, if compared with Heaven. But how ſhall I do for my Children? what

will

will become of them, when I am dead and gone? Why, do you make nothing of God's promiſe? Is not he a Father to the Fatherleſs? And is it not his command, that we ſhould leave our Fatherleſs Children with him? Can't God take as good care of them as you? O, but the Grave is a doleful place, and who can think with any comfort of being nail'd up in a Coffin, and covered over with Earth, and of rotting under ground; Why Man, is the Reſurrection no comfort to thee? if there were no ſuch thing, this arguing were the more excuſable; who are you I pray, that you ſhould be privileged above all the Kings and Monarcks ſince the beginning of the World, which of them have ſecured themſelves from the power of Death? which of them could retain their breath a moment, when Death had received his Commiſſion to ſtop it. Are you better than *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, did not *David* ſee corruption, and the Fathers, where are they? nay, did not Chriſt die, and dye ſo bitter a death, as I believe never any from the foundation of the world ever did. Muſt God make thee the third that muſt be ſingled out from Man-kind, to be tranſlated to Glory? do you walk as *Enoch* and *Elias* did? and if you do, I know you would then be ſo humble, not to expect this prerogative; and ſo full of love to God, as to be contented to die, if it were a hundred deaths, ſo you might but enjoy him for ever: And what ſay you now? is there not a root of unbelief at the bottom? is there not ſomething of Atheiſm in this? hath not the world a prevailing intereſt in your affections? do

do you think you have not had time enough yet to ſin? would you fain diſpleaſe God a little more? do you imagine that you have not ſufficiently abuſed his goodneſs? if not, what is the matter? O, *I* want Aſſurance! did *I* but know that *I* am indeed reconciled to God, then, O then *I* could die as willingly as ſleep! The truth of it is, there can be no other reaſon that can bear any great weight, except this, and a deſire to glorifie God more in bringing in ſouls to him. As for this latter, *I* wave it; few of my hearers being ſo much concerned in that, as Miniſters are; but as for the former, *I* would upon this account put you upon the moſt ſpeedy and ſerious diligence in this work. *I* believe the Apoſtle had ſome reaſon on his ſide, when he did ſo earneſtly perſwade the People of God to uſe all diligence to make their Calling and Election ſure, and to work out their own ſalvation with fear and trembling. Why then ſhould not every Chriſtian without delay ſet upon this? And then the next news we ſhould hear, would be, Come Lord Jeſus, why are thy Chariot wheels ſo long a coming? O that *I* might but come to eternal life, though thorough the valley of the ſhadow of death! 'Tis our trifling with God that makes the thoughts of our appearing before him to be ſo dreadful. Our formality, deadneſs and coldneſs, our worldly mindedneſs and lazineſs, doth us a world of injury. This, this diſturbeth our peace, this ſtrengthens Satan and blurs our evidences, and makes us go deſponding into another world, and this brings me to the next Uſe.

Uſe

Use V.

Is it so that they are blessed that die in the Lord, *&c.* be hence exhorted, to live so as that you may die in the Lord. Will you take so much pains for a little gains in this life, and will you take none at all for eternal blessings? How many hazardous voyages have some of you made to *Ginnee*, and the *East-Indies*, to get Gold and Spices? how many terrible storms have you been in, and what inconceivable hazards have you run that you might enjoy your selves in age, & have something to carry you comfortably and decently to your graves? O why should you not be as solicitous in your soul concerns? Remember my dear friends, that you are bound for another world, and you must ere long sail into the Ocean of Eternity. Consider what your laiding is, and whether it will return to any account when you come home to your great Owner. Me thinks you of all Men should think Grace the best commodity, and Christianity the best trade, and the securing of everlasting happiness, the greatest wisdom. How can you live within a few inches of death, and look the King of terrours in the face every day, without some well-grounded evidences of your interest in God's love? O who would not labour to get out of danger? Who would not think it a blessed estate to be beyond fears? Who can take it to be an unnecessary work to secure a soul? Is not this the one thing needful? what should a Man get, if he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? and what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? But you Professors, above all,

all, it concerns you to make as ſure as can be poſſible, of ſomething better than you can have here below. What a lamentable thing would it be for you to undergo ſo many reproaches for Chriſts ſake, to venture your liberties, and to hazard your eſtates, and after all to be left in woful uncertainties? It would be a dreadful thing to loſe the comforts of both worlds. O make ſure work! your pains and coſt here will pay its own charges; be not daunted, 'tis a thing hath been done; what do you ſay? will you take ſome pains in the examining of your heart? will you keep any guard over your ſelf? will you wreſtle for this bleſſing? O what courage and comfort ſhould you be endowed with! with what a cheerful countenance may you meet death? and how quietly lie down in your grave being ſupported with the hopes of a bleſſed Eternity, and a glorious Reſurrection.

But I ſhall a little alter my diſcourſe, and turn my ſelf to the careleſs ones of the world; which think little of death, and leſs of eternity. I had occaſion before to bewail your condition, and now *I* might renew my lamentations, as fearing that what *I* have ſpoke, or may ſpeak, will have very little operation upon you; but however *I* cannot leave you thus, but *I* muſt try once more, how a plain compaſſionate exhortation will prevail. O that *I* could tell what words to ſpeak, that might teach your heart! O that *I* could expreſs my ſelf in ſuch melting words that might break the very ſtones! O that you may feel this exhortation!

Men, Brethren, and Fathers, give me leave to

let you understand how dearly I love you, and to shew my affections in the most real demonstrations that may be. Sirs, I am come to beg of you for God's sake, to be willing to live; I beseech you despise not the blessing, but accept Christ and salvation while they are offered. Were it a thing possible to be happy any other way but by Christ and a holy life, I should spare my labour. If glory could be obtained upon easier terms than the Gospel speaks of, I should ease my self and you of this trouble. And if any were like to be blessed after death, but such as die in the Lord, I should be the more indifferent in this matter; but since that cannot be, methinks those three weighty words, Life, Death, Eternity, should have a mighty influence upon you. O let not a day pass without some serious thoughts of this! I need not perswade you to love your lives, nature teacheth you to do that; but there is another life, which is hid from the World, which most forget; O think of that! that's a life indeed, a life of joy, happiness and pleasure! death sounds oft in the ears; every passing bell tels you, that your breath is going, and that your turn is coming, and all the Coffins that are carried by your doors, say, prepare, do your work quickly, 'twill shortly be too late. But who understands the meaning of this Preacher? who takes any thought of another life, makes ready for death, and looks into Eternity? O Eternity! Eternity! how rarely do Men think of Eternity! O that now some would begin to be wise! Do you think your Sun will never set? will your sands be never run out? and do you know what dying is? then

then the keepers of the houſe will tremble, the windows ſhall be ſhut, and inſtead of the daughters of Muſick, the voice of groaning, lamentation and weeping. It may be death will lay his cold hand firſt upon thy feet, and bind them, and they are as cold as the earth, and what a damp doth this put upon thy ſpirit? and then you cry, once more ſend for the Doctor, and he comes in haſte. O Sir, a world for breath, half my eſtate to preſerve my life a day or two longer; and what anſwer doth he make? Sir, 'tis but a folly to flatter you; all the art in the world will not keep you alive two hours longer; what did you ſend for me for, to a dead man? and ſo he flings away in a rage; and how doth the fainting Patient hear ſuch tidings! O what ſhall I do! what, will all forſake me? can no body help me? well, ſend for a Miniſter, and what ſaith he, Sir, how have you lived? did you pray in your Family? do you know experimentally what Regeneration is? what do you ſay? Sir, I do not underſtand that word: What, did you never hear a Sermon in your life? were you born in *England*? To be regenerated, is to be born again; do you know what that is? O no, that's impoſſible! Why then, Sir, you are in a lamentable condition indeed; you cannot live an hour longer, and if you die in this ſtate, you muſt go to Hell, as ſure as God is in Heaven. O how doth that word ſtrike the Man to the heart! and what a flame hath he within! and what horrour is his ſoul filled with! It cannot be imagined what Agonies the ſoul as well as the body now labours under. O that I might

die the death of the righteous! and are all my hopes come to this? woe, woe, woe to me poor wretch, whither am I now going? where ſhall I now dwell? who ſhall be my companions for ever? O that I had but now a little of that grace which I deſpiſed in others! but it's now too late! O my heart, I am pained at my heart! O my breath it is going, it is juſt a going! O what ſhall I do! O 'tis too late! O what ſhall— And thus his breath goes, and his friends come round about him, and one lifts up his hand, and that falls down again like a log, and others feel upon his noſe, and there's no breath, and then they ſay he is gone, and ſo one cloſeth his eyes, and others ſtrip him, and lay him out, and two days after he is put into the Grave: but where, where is the ſoul? And thus one goes after another, and ſhortly all this Generation will be ſerved thus. And thou, O careleſs ſoul, as little as thou mindeſt all this, it may be thou mayſt be the next, and what will become of thee, if death take thee unprovided! Now Sirs, what will you do? will you go on juſt as you did? will you put far from you the thoughts of the evil day? will you ſhake of the ſenſe of this as ſoon as you can? I believe that this is none of the pleaſanteſt diſcourſes to ſome of you: But I would have you to know that my buſineſs is not to pleaſe your fancy, but to ſave your ſouls, and to wake you out of your dead ſleep; and if I do but this I have enough. Once more therefore I muſt ask you what you intend to do; will you endeavour to live to Chriſt, that you may die in the Lord? or will you do as others do, put off the thoughts

of

of theſe things till it be too late? Is this a queſtion ſo hard to be anſwered? Well, me thinks the very looks of ſome of you ſpeak you to be Perſons reſolved, and by this time you are ready to ask how you ſhall do to be of this number that ſhall die in the Lord, and be bleſſed; how you may trade ſo as to get the moſt durable riches; and how you may live ſo as to gain by death? In general, I anſwer, If you would have death gain, you muſt live to Chriſt; make it your work and buſineſs to ſecure an intereſt in Chriſt; let religion run thorow all you do; (but for your fuller information in this matter, I ſhall refer you to the latter end of my Book of Acquaintance with God, which is now reprinted) at preſent my advice ſhall be, that you would follow them, who thorow faith and patience are the inheriters of the promiſe; and propoſe to your ſelves the examples of the moſt eminent Chriſtians; ſuch as this precious young Mans, whoſe Funeral Rites we are now ſolemnizing; and becauſe examples are very cogent, and affect moſt, more than precepts, I ſhall preſent you with an account of ſome of this holy young Mans practices and experiences: Take them therefore as I have gather'd them by my own experience and intimate knowledge of him; and as I have collected them out of many ſheets of his own writings. But let it not be thought, I beſeech you, that out of cuſtom or flattery, I ſpeak ſuch Funeral Commendations; were he but a Common Chriſtian, I would have forborn ſpeaking any thing of this nature, for fear of hardening ſinners. I muſt deal plainly, I abhor that curſed

flattery in commending all that are buried; as if to die, and to go to Heaven were all one. I know many rotten Posts are guilded; many Sepulchres that are full of Bones, and putrified flesh, are painted, and many Professors are extolled at their death, who did no good while they lived, except it were the giving some pittiful pittance to the poor when they could keep it no longer. I question not but that thousands are praised upon Earth, that are condemned in Heaven; and many applauded for Saints, that will be found among the Devils and damned. Expect it not therefore as a thing like to be usual with me to commend dead Persons. As I would judge none, so I dare commend but few. This only by way of Apology. I shall come to the thing promised, to propose some imitable passages of the life of *T. M.*

1. He began to look Heaven-ward betimes; he was made to remember his Creator in the days of his youth; his first convictions were at about twelve years old, but they had no abiding impression upon him; the great work was begun to purpose between seventeen and eighteen. I shall be the more brief here, because you have the account more full from his own hand. The change that was wrought upon him did express more of the power of God, and the riches of his grace than ordinary. The Lord made his work upon him very clear and distinct; for he broke in upon his soul like an armed Man, and shook him terribly over Hell, and the terrours of God set themselves in array against him, and the poison of his arrows drank up his spirits, so

did appear in its colour to him as ugly as the Devil, and as dreadful as Hell it ſelf, ſo that the foundation was laid in very deep humility. O then, how frightful a thing was ſin, yea his beloved ſin, the ſin of gaming was made moſt loathſome and abominable, ſo that for that he loathed himſelf in duſt and aſhes, and looked upon himſelf as unworthy to tread upon God's ground, and had not God ordered it ſo as that the firſt Sermon he heard after this great conviction was upon that Scripture, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. he had even fallen into deſpair, but the thoughts of God's having mercy upon the chiefeſt of ſinners, did a little ſupport his ſoul, and gave him hopes of a poſſibility of being ſaved.

2. This put him upon ſtrong groans and Prayers, that the Lord would pitty him as ever he would pitty any poor Creature in the world, O that he would pitty him; haſt thou not a bleſſing for me, O God, even for me, what ſhall I do, now I am without God, Chriſt, or Grace, my condition is ſuch I cannot bear it, who can be contented to be damned! O pitty me, pitty me, dear Lord, I cannot tell what in the world to do; mercy, mercy, mercy, or I am loſt, mercy ſpeedily, or I am loſt for ever: And ſo he continued in a way of duty, reading, and praying, and inquiring, and reſolving thus to do all his days; and now farewell wicked company, farewell ſports, and vanity, and idleneſs, the great buſineſs of minding his ſoul now ſwallows him up, and after a while he hath a little more peace than he had, but upon further enquiry and waiting upon the means, he was convinced that all this

would not do without the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt: And this brings me to the next thing,

3. He was deeply convinced of the abſolute neceſſity and excellency of Chriſt, and brought off from his own righteouſneſs, to high prizings and admirings of Chriſt, take his own words, 'And is it true indeed, hath Chriſt done and ſuf-'fered ſuch things for thee, O my poor ſinful, 'vile, odious polluted ſoul, and what wilt not 'thou love him now? O think a little what put 'him upon all this, was it any ſelf-intereſt, is he 'any gainer by thee, he got nothing but grief, 'pain and death. O my ſoul it was free, pure 'and undeniable love, that cauſed him to do 'and ſuffer what he did; conſider again, O my 'ſoul, what cauſe was there that he ſhould make 'thee a partaker of the benefit of his blood, 'what waſt thou, Oh a moſt loathſome ſinner, 'and what wilt thou not yet love him? O Lord, 'I am aſhamed of my own heart, that I cannot 'raiſe it to the higheſt pitch of admiration of 'that infinite boundleſs love. O love, love, love; 'O that I could love thee, O Lord, I would 'fain be ſick of love, O that I could dye ſick of 'love to thee, O that I could feel thee warming 'my heart with that quickning blood which thou 'ſheddeſt upon the Croſs; O what love is like 'to that; O my ſoul, it was ſhed for thee who 'was an enemy, a rebel, a deſpiſer of Chriſt! 'awake O bleſſed ſpirit and blow upon my ſoul, 'and kindle a fire which may burn with love to 'Chriſt, to all Eternity, Amen, Amen.

4. He did upon this in a ſerious and ſolemn manner give up himſelf to the Lord in a Cove-

nant, (I ſhall not repeat the words of this Covenant, becauſe they are taken verbatim out of my Book of Acquaintance with God) and he ſubſcribed his name to it, and kept it as a witneſs before the Lord, and to quicken his own ſoul to a more cloſe walking with God according to the Articles of that Covenant.

5. After he was gone thus far, his bowels began to yern over his Chriſtleſs friends, ſome of which (I perceive by his letters) began to abuſe him for his ſerioufneſs, and to deride his ſtrictneſs, and jeer at his holineſs: ſhall I give you a taſte of his ſpirit, I cannot do it in warmer words than his own which are as followeth.—

'Yours I received, but whether I dare to thank 'you for it, I know not, for truly I cannot ex- 'preſs the trouble that hath ſince ſeized upon 'my ſpirit; O poor ſoul, what ſhall I ſay unto 'thee? O my bowels, my bowels, they yern to- 'wards thee, I am pained, yea I am pained while 'I think upon thy condition, what ſhall I do for 'thee, what ſhall I ſay unto thee; I could be 'contented that theſe Lines were writ with my 'very heart blood, ſo that they might affect thee; 'O I had rather die than receive another ſuch 'Letter from you, I could not reliſh it, it was 'bitter, I could not ſee the name of dear Jeſus 'in it,—how can I think of your blind ſuper- 'ſtition, and not mourn and lament over a dead 'ſoul! you ſay you are ſorry, and you are trou- 'bled. What is the matter, are you ſorry that I 'ſhould concern my ſelf about my ſoul, and a- 'bout yours; you would not trouble your ſelf 'about theſe things now, if not now, I pray when

'will

'will you, at the hour of Death, at the Day of
'Judgment, O then it will be too late; O now
'or never, delays are dangerous. O Eternity,
'Eternity, O where ſhall yours and my Soul
'dwell to all Eternity. Oh, either in Heaven,
'or in Hell, either with Chriſt or Devils, the
'Soul that ſins ſhall die; your debt is great, the
'juſtice of God muſt be ſatisfied, and nothing
'can do it but the blood of Jeſus, O for this
'precious Jeſus, make not light of Chriſt, he is
'precious, he is altogether lovely; I would not
'for ten thouſand worlds quit my ſhare in him,
'and in that which is the matter of your fear,
'you complain that I have left the ways of our
'fore-fathers,—I fear you take the ſhadow for
'the ſubſtance; what is the Croſs in Baptiſm,
'without the Baptiſm of the Spirit; what good
'will the bowing at the name of Jeſus do them,
'which perſecute him in his members, and have
'him not formed in their hearts,—O that God
'would cut aſunder your falſe hopes, if Chriſt
'were in you, you would rejoyce, to think that
'he hath been at work in my ſoul, was I born
'with theſe principles which you read in my laſt
'Letters, *I* am ſure *I* was once of an other mind
'than now *I* am, but bleſſed, yea admired be free
'grace, which hath made me to differ from my
'ſelf and others. *I* am afraid you underſtand
'not my meaning, when *I* ſpeak of love to God
'and Regeneration, as long as *I* only concern-
'ed my ſelf about the World, and not my ſoul,
'you kindly entertained my Letters; but no
'ſooner did *I* ſpeak of repentance, and the af-
'fairs of our poor never dying ſouls, but then

'you

'you are troubled, and cannot bear it. *I* tell 'you, *I* lay dead almoſt eighteen years, and then 'I had a gracious wound from my dear God, 'which made me cry out, where am *I*, *I* am un-'done, *I* am undone, my ſin will damn me. O 'what ſhall *I* do for a Chriſt! — And at this rate he goes on writing many Letters, which did all breath a divine ſpirit.

6. He was very ſpiritual in his diſcourſe, and by that he put life into moſt of them that converſed with him; how helpful was he to young Chriſtians! how ready to hearten them up in the ways of God, and how able to diſcover to them the policies of Satan! he was ſcarce in his element, but when he was doing or receiving of good, he ſtudied Mr. *Herbert Palmer's* little Book about making Religion ones buſineſs, and he did in a great meaſure put it into practice: To uſe his own expreſſions, 'I did, ſaith he, 'labour to ſpiritualize common action, and to 'ſerve God in ſerving my Maſter with diligence, 'cheerfulneſs and faithfulneſs. O what reſort was there of young ones to him for direction and advice in things which they did not think it ſo fit to trouble their Paſtor with, and how did he endeavour to ſeaſon his fellow ſervants with grace. When he went to any of his Maſters Patients, how diligent in uſing of means for their recovery, and how careful to drop ſomething that might tend to the health of their ſouls, and as he had opportunity amongſt the weaker and poorer ſort, he would pray with them, and O with what vehemency of ſpirit, with what fluency of expreſſion, and with what mighty affe-

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ctions would he do it? *I* need not tell ſome of you, how helpful he hath been to the bodies and ſouls of the ſick, and upon this account he looked upon it as a great mercy that the Lord had called him to ſuch an employment, wherein he had ſuch ſingular advantages to deal with poor Souls about the affairs of Eternity: I queſtion not, but there are ſome ſtanding here that have cauſe to bleſs God that ever they ſaw his face, and I believe that ſome of you that are young and poor will quickly dearly miſs him.

7. He was exceedingly raiſed in duty, and one that enjoyed rare communion, intimacy and acquaintance with God; and for about 5. moneths (as his own Papers ſhew) together, he rarely came into the Preſence of God, but he went away with ſome ſpecial tokens of his love; ſo that he ſaid, he could have been contented to have left the World at a quarter of an hours warning: Hear how his Papers ſpeak; 'My 'ſoul continued (if my heart do not mightily 'deceive me) in a thriving condition for five 'moneths. O the comforts that I then had, they 'are unſpeakable, I ſeldome went to duty, but 'carryed my dear Saviour, and brought him a-'way with me; every Ordinance was a viſit of 'love; my love to Jeſus Chriſt, and his mem-'bers, where ever I ſaw them, was not to be ex-'preſſed; what hatred to ſin, what Zeal for 'God's glory, what yerning of bowels towards 'poor ſouls in the ſtate of nature, how beauti-'ful were the feet of the Embaſſadors of peace, 'what a fulneſs and ſweetneſs did I then ſee and 'feel in Chriſt, ever hungring after him, and e-

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'ver ſatisfied with him, and him alone, what af-
'fections God-ward, what deſpiſing of viſibles,
'what deep apprehenſions of the Majeſty and
'Attributes of God, how did I walk unweari-
'edly with him, how did I rejoyce before him
'with fear, and truſt filially in him with trem-
'bling! O what watchfulneſs over my thoughts,
'words and actions: Indeed I was often aſſault-
'ed, but I had a faithful Centinel which would
'give warning, and admit of none but ſuch as
'were friends to the Lord Jeſus; what low
'thoughts had I of my ſelf, and high prizings of
'a naked Chriſt! Oh Sir, in one word, I made
'Religion my buſineſs, and was taken up with
'that which concerned the glory of God; eve-
'ry grace was at ſtrife which ſhould excel other
'in its actings; I could never go to Market, but
'I could experience returns of Grace and Mer-
'cy. In this I have not varied two words from
his own writings, in a Letter that he gave me,
wherein he did grievouſly bewail the leaſt de-
partures of his heart from God, as you ſhall
hear in the next.

8. He took ſpecial notice of his own heart,
and did mightily bewail any declinings from
that vigour that ſometimes he had; and here I
ſhall again uſe his words as they follow—'But
'this did not continue long, it was as a calm be-
'fore a ſtorm, for ſoon after (my time being al-
'moſt out) I began to have ſome thoughts of
'my ſetting up, and entring into the world; but
'I had no ſooner imbraced the motion, but that
'very day I felt a change in my poor ſoul, *viz.*
'a too too much letting out my thoughts upon
'it,

'it, which I moſt perceived in duty, and the De-
'vil, who long waited his opportunity, did then,
'I am afraid, not only parley, but get entrance,
'through the treachery and deceitfulneſs of my
'wretched heart, and he told me that I might
'lawfully ſettle my mind upon this, it being a
'buſineſs of great concernment, and that it
'would be but a little while, and then I ſhould
'return to my former temper in ſpiritual mat-
'ters; upon thoſe deluſions my ſilly heart gave
'way, and I found too much willingneſs of ſoul
'to place its concerns in that matter, and ſo I
'laying down my watch, ſoon loſt my former ex-
'periences, and every day I found my comforts
'on the ebbing hand, I ſecretly departed from
'God, and darkned the light of his countenance,
'that did ſhine ſometimes upon my ſoul, and had
'not infinite grace put a ſeaſonable word into
'your mouth to prevent me, how had I fallen,
'and whither had I gone? I could not have
'thought it poſſible that ever my heart ſhould
'decline ſo ſtrangely as it did. I that formerly
'could ſerve my Maſter faithfully, cheerfully,
'and comfortably, did it grutchingly, and not
'out of love, though I never fell ſo far, (through
'grace) as to neglect any thing of his buſineſſes,
'yet I loſt the right principles of action; and
'the art of ſpiritualizing of civil affairs; and
'this laſted for about three moneths; it is ſcarce
'to be thought what perplexities I brought my
'ſelf into, by my back-ſliding from God; I have
'not time to declare things, and had I, it would
'be very unwelcome to you; true, I hope I did
'enjoy ſome communion with God, when I was

'engaged

'engaged in duties, eſpecially in that to be admi-
'red Ordinance of the Sacrament and Prayer;
'but yet my comforts and duty uſually ended
'together, I hope the experience that *I* have
'had of the treachery of my own heart, will
'make me carry a ſence of my weakneſs and fol-
'ly, ſo as to throw my ſelf wholly upon the
'wiſdom of God —— *I* have thus opened my
'ſoul to you, O that the Lord, who firſt for his
'own name ſake ſhewed mercy to me when *I*
'deſerved none, would now look upon me in my
'low eſtate, and conſult the ſame bowels of pi-
'ty and compaſſion, which are infinite, paſt the
'ſins of finite creatures; O that he would heal
'my back-ſlidings, and love me freely: God is
'the ſame, and changeth not, and my hopes are
'that he will again return and viſit my Soul in
'mercy —— After this the Lord was pleaſed to
come in again, and he found his former comforts
in ſome meaſure returning after a great deal of
pains with his own heart, and wreſtling with
God: Hear what language he begins to ſpeak
again,

'Bleſſed be God for what *I* do enjoy, it is ten
'thouſand times more than *I* deſerve, *I* hope the
'dew of the Sanctuary doth oft refreſh me, and
'the blood of Jeſus is my cordial, when *I* ſit at
'his Table, he viſits me, and his banner over me
'is love. *I* may ſpeak it to the glory of rich
'grace, that my heart is in a better frame than
'it was, and I am more free from diſtractions in
'duty, but yet I am far from that frame that I
'was once in, my diſtemper it lyeth in a want
of thoſe ſtrong affections to God: and that

which

'which hath made me ſo ſilent to you is the fear 'of hypocriſie; leaſt my tongue ſhould at any 'time out-reach my heart. I might be far larger and yet ſpeak none but his words, this I think may prove that he was a very curious obſerver of his own ſoul, and took notice of the leaſt departures of his heart from God, or God's abſenting of himſelf from him. I might tell you what pains he took to prepare for the Sacrament and what exactneſs he uſed afterwards in taking notice how his ſoul was affected, and when it was not raiſed, what care did he uſe till he found a freſh warmth, heat and life animating of him; I might tell you how frequent he was in that rare duty of Meditation; I ſpeak not this without book, many ſheets of his Meditations which I have by me, ſhew that he was no ſtranger to thoſe ſpiritual duties, which few underſtand, and fewer practiſe.

9. He was greatly deſirous to be reproved and watched over, that of the Pſalmiſt was oft in his mouth, and written in his Letter, Let the Righteous ſmite me, and it ſhall be a kindneſs, and let him reprove me, and it ſhall be excellent Oyl, which ſhall not break my head.

10. He was much exerciſed in acts of mortification and ſelf-denyal, he laboured to keep under his body, to have the command of his paſſions and affections, very temperate, drinking water, *&c.*

11. He was frequently praiſing of God and ſpeaking well of his ways; indeed his deportment was ſuch that he credited Religion, and commended the ſervice of his great Maſter, and made

made People to believe that Religion was an excellent thing, and he juſtified wiſdom, and was able to ſay her ways were pleaſantneſs, and her paths peace.

12. He was a very good Husband of time, one would wonder, how one could roll over ſuch a deal of buſineſs as he did, not in the leaſt neglecting his Maſters affairs, and yet that he ſhould write ſuch packets of Letters, and pen ſo many Meditations, and be ſo very helpful to his Brethren the young Men: How many Books did he read over, and read them to the purpoſe, ſo as to make them his own, ſome of them five or ſix times over, and if he had no company to diſcourſe with, when he went abroad, he looks oft into his Pocket Book, which was called, Making Religion ones buſineſs.

13. He had a ſtrong affection for the faithful Miniſters of Chriſt, and was concerned when the Cloud began to threaten them, that he ingaged all the Prayers he could for them, that the Lord would blow over this ſtorm, and I am ready to think that this might haſten his end.

14. He was greatly afraid of ſpiritual pride, to this end; he deſired me to keep a watch over him, and beſeeched me to diſcover it to him, when I did at any time diſcern the actings of it, but though he had great parts and gifts above his age, yet the ſence of former ſins, and his curious obſervance of his heart, and the ſence of free grace, kept him very low.

15. He ſeemed to be poſſeſſed with the thoughts of death and Eternity. He had a ſtrong impreſſion upon his ſpirit, of the neerneſs of his

end for about half a year before he dyed. And,

16. He was much above the fears of Death, and from a deep ſence of the reality of inviſibles, and his propriety in them; he thought long for poſſeſſion; and he could ſay, I deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with Jeſus.

On the Lords Day before he dyed, he was in an extaſie of comfort, and felt what thoſe joyes (unſpeakable in believing) meant, in former times he had great manifeſtations of Gods love, but never any broke into his ſoul with ſuch power, and clear evidence as then; he had as it were a proſpect of glory, and ſome foretaſtes of that happineſs that was prepared for him before the foundations of the World; and O how did his heart even leap within him, to think that within a little while he ſhould fully, and eternally enjoy, what he now had a little glympſe of.——

Upon *Munday* I went to viſit him, and found him in a very ſweet frame, ſo taken up with Heaven, that he did even wonder at himſelf. I am (ſaith he) ſo overcome with the love of Chriſt and the glory of Heaven, that all manner of fear is hid from mine eyes, and I cannot ſo much as think of Hell; or if I do, it is with joy that there is no condemnation to them which are in Chriſt Jeſus: but what do you think of theſe things, is it poſſible that they ſhould be deluſions; O Sir, I beſeech you be faithful to my ſoul, and tell me, as you will anſwer it at the Barr of God, what you judge of my ſtate; I would not for a World be now in a fools Paradice; and then he told me his experiences, and intreated

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me to ſearch and try him, and again, and again, he expreſſed his great joy under the apprehenſions of death, and that glorious Eternity that he was paſſing into; 'I deſired earneſtly to diſ-'courſe with you (ſaid he) becauſe I expect to 'loſe the uſe of my reaſon, and am not like to 'be capable of ſpeaking my mind to you here-'after, and then he intreated me to give him a 'Funeral Sermon: And all this he ſpoke with as much cheerfulneſs as can well be imagined, ſpeaking of death as the moſt deſirable thing; 'O, ſaith he, that I were but ten times ſicker, 'I long to die, I am ill, but *I* would be ill to 'purpoſe; O dear Jeſus, *I* long to be with 'thee.

Upon *Tueſday*, his diſtemper grew much upon him, and began a little at times to impair his intellectuals, and yet by fits he would ſpeak excellently of the things of God; being asked whether he was willing to die, he anſwered, 'That Eternity was too little for him to praiſe 'God in for his rich mercy to ſuch a poor crea-'ture as he was, that the Lord ſhould prepare 'ſuch an inheritance amongſt the Saints in glo-'ry for him, and that his life was hid with Chriſt, 'and that when Chriſt, who was his life, ſhould 'appear, he alſo ſhould appear with him in glo-'ry: This morning he prayed for, and exhorted thoſe that were in the Family, to prepare to meet him in glory.

Upon *Wedneſday*, when he had any intermiſſions, he broke out into ſuch expreſſions as theſe. 'Dear Jeſus, what art thou doing, pre-'paring Manſions for me? I am coming ſweet

'Jesus, I am coming, —— It is but a little 'while, a little thread, and when that is cut, I 'shall be safe in glory. Being very ill, he said, 'What if I should live two hours, or two days, 'what is that to a glorious Eternity? Death, 'what is it but a Porter to open Heaven-Gate 'for me? —— What is all the World compared 'to that Crown which I shall receive? —— Being asked how he did, he answered very well, one standing by said no, you are very ill; he replyed, 'I know I am very sick, but I say I am 'well, because I am as God would have me be. When I came to him in the afternoon, I found him exceeding ill, and betraying some weakness in his intellectuals, and his discourse being very impertinent; I said to him, your language was wont to be spiritual, but now you forget your self; 'It is true Sir, said he, but you know what 'the condition of my body now is, blessed be 'God the root of matter is in me. After this he was very still and quiet whilst I read to him, and seemed to be much pleased at the reading of the fifty fourth, and fifty fifth of *Isaiah*, and gave a very rational account of any spiritual question that was put to him, and very desirous that I should pray with him.

Upon *Thursday*, because of extraordinary business of my own I could not be present with him.

Upon *Friday*, he was taken speechless for many hours together, but according to our Prayers at last he recovered the use of his reason more than before, and could speak that we might well understand him; then I asked him how he did,

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he answered me *Still alive*.—After a considerable pause, he cryed out *Gracious Father, thy Will be done.* Then *I* opened several Scriptures to him, which speak the blessed state of Saints in another World, and when *I* asked him whether he did understand me; He answered, *Yes, Yes*, and wept several times for joy. Now the Symptoms of death approaching come upon him, scarce any pulse, and a dying sweat, and the last words that *I* heard him speak were *Glory, Glory* —— After that he continued in very great Agonies, and his pangs were strong, till about 11 of the Clock, then he slept in Jesus: being exceedingly lamented by the young Men of his Society, many of which were about him.

FINIS.

An Accompt of God's Dealings with this young man, before and at his Converſion, with ſome Remarks upon the ſame; as it was Delivered to me under his own hand (after I had diſcourſed with him) by way of Dialogue between a Miniſter and himſelf.

Miniſter. WHat ought to be the great care and duty of every profeſſing Chriſtian in theſe our days?

Convert. Pray What may be the Reaſon of this your Queſtion?

Min. I have very many Reaſons, but one is this, Becauſe it is daily ſeen that very many, who have made great profeſſion of Religion, and are accounted amongſt the wiſe Virgins, fall away, which is very ſad to conſider; and I fear that the Reaſon is, becauſe there is not that care taken about the ſtate of their Souls

which there ought to be, now I pray you answer me my Question, *viz.* What ought, *&c.*

Conv. With respect to the former, It ought to be every Christians great care to examine himself whether he be in the state of grace or no, and which way the Lord was pleased to bring him into that blessed condition; sith it is to be feared the want of this is the great and chief cause of Mans apostasie from Religion, for had he ever been truly wrought upon by the spirit of God, had his convictions (which more or less all have had) turned to a true conversion, and had his pangs of sorrow for sin but brought forth regeneration, then surely he would have been in such an estate, from which all the malice of the powers of darkness could not have drawn him.

Min. The Answer doth somewhat savour of goodness, and that you understand with your heart, what you express with the tongue; conversion or regeneration is a mighty work, and on whomsoever it is truly wrought, that Person can say somewhat more or less concerning the nature of it, and how it was wrought in his soul; if the Lord hath in any measure revealed himself to you in this way, let me intreat you (both for your own souls good, and perhaps other souls good, but chiefly that the Lord may thereby be glorified) to let me know the time and manner of his drawing you to himself, by his unspeakable love and mercy?

Conv. Oh: Blessed be God that he hath opened the heart of his faithful Minister to demand such a matter of such a poor wretch as I am;

am; Oh what am I that I ſhould be examined, inſtructed and confirmed, about the matters of my eternal, precious, and never dying ſoul? Oh that the Lord would ſo enable me in this great work, that I may not be found to lye againſt the Holy Ghoſt, by adding to, or diminiſhing from what I have found; but that I may have my heart and conſcience witneſſing within me, that theſe following things are ſo indeed.

Min. I am glad to hear what you have ſaid, and the Lord bring all things concerning our preſent work into your remembrance, that his Name may be glorified, and your Soul much comforted; and to this end it will be requiſite to demand of you, What condition are you in by nature?

Conv. O Sir, a Rebel to my God, a ſlave to my luſt, a prodigal to my Father, an alien from the Common-Wealth of *Iſrael*; In ſhort, had I dyed in my natural ſtate; I had been eternally miſerable, *John* 3. 3. *except*, &c.

Min. How long did you continue in that deplorable condition?

Conv. Oh too too long, but yet bleſſed be God, and admired be free Grace, that it was no longer, it was as neer as I can gueſs eighteen years and a few days, when the Lord did incline my heart in good earneſt to ſeek the things of its everlaſting peace.

Min. Well, and how then did the Lord begin with you; were your eyes never opened to ſee your loſt undone condition before that time?

Conv. Oh yes, when I was twelve or thir-

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teen years of age, the Lord diſcovered my condition ſo much to me, that I did then firmly believe, all that did ſerve the Lord were in a very bleſſed and happy eſtate, let what come as could come they were happy, and likewiſe that if I ſhould then have dyed, I ſhould have been eternally miſerable; having no hopes in Chriſt, neither did I in that condition expect any benefit by him; and as I very well remember, the Lord made the thoughts of death ſo terrible, that I could not endure to think of it, but yet it came ſo much in my mind, and did ſo terrifie me, that I cannot expreſs how I did dread to think of it, but this worked nothing in me; but (Oh with horrour and amazement be it ſpoken) I was willing then to go to Hell, and did rejoyce in that I could quell my gripes of conſcience, by thinking that I ſhould be as well able to endure the flames of Hell, and the frowns of an angry God, as any of them all, and that I ſhould have company enough there, and ſo did rejoyce, becauſe I was willing to be damned, willing to be damned; how, what did I ſay? but ſurely, I was not; Oh my ſoul, how can it be? make anſwer; was it ſo? yes, and was I, oh was I indeed willing to be damned, oh the height, and length, and breadth, and depth of the love, and goodneſs, and long ſuffering patience of an offended and highly provoked God, that I was not then thrown into Hell indeed; but that he ſhould ſuffer ſuch ſtubble as I was to be in his ſight, and that the Fire of his Jealouſie had not conſumed me as in a moment, but ſtill I went on in ſin, as if I would not have let God alone till he had damned me.

Min-

Min. By what you have ſaid, I perceive then you were throughly convinced of the neceſſity of holineſs, and of leaving your ſins, and ſerving the Lord, and that there muſt be Regeneration wrought in you, before Glorification could be hoped for by you; but ſurely being convinced of the bleſſed condition of the godly, you could not but ſometimes wiſh your ſelf in their condition; how did you carry your ſelf under this, did you reſolve that you would never be as they were?

Conv. Truly, many times I would have been glad to have been in their condition, but I was ſo glued to the world, and my ſins, that I could not endure to think of leaving them, yet (to my beſt remembrance) I never reſolved that if I ſhould live never ſo long, I would not repent, but that after I had gotten a great eſtate in the World, and was grown old, and were as it were uncapable of taking any more delight in theſe things below, that then *I* would have ſet out towards Heaven, and oh *I* cannot but think (and *I* deſire with fear and trembling to think) what a loathſome Sacrifice *I* ſhould then have been, even ſtunk in God's noſtrils, when *I* had given the marrow, and fatneſs, and ſtrength of my body to the Devil; then *I* ſhould have had juſt cauſe to fear the Lord would have buryed me out of his ſight; Oh *I* ſay, *I* ſtaid in the Devils ſervice ſo long, that *I* ſmelt ſo of Fire and Brimſtone, *I* mean of Sin, that had not the Body of a Crucified Advocate Jeſus Chriſt, as a Vail, ſtood between the Juſtice of God, and my guilty Soul, certainly he would ſoon have drawn

drawn out a bill of indictment againſt me, and have ſent me a way with a *Go ye Curſed.*

Min. By what you have ſaid, I perceive you lay under Convictions for about Six Years, with very little grief or ſorrow for ſin, but although you knew what you were to do, yet you did not do what you did know: I will ask you but one queſtion more, before I come to the chief point in hand, and that is this; What duties you engaged in in this time, and how you carried your ſelf under them?

Conv. Now, even now, I begin to revolt from my promiſe, but that I might (if poſſible) debaſe my ſelf below the vileſt Creature in the World, I will declare ſomething, and enough to make your very Hair to ſtand an end, and oh that the Lord would now make me ſo reflect upon my ſelf, that *I* may abhor my wretched ſelf in duſt and aſhes, for (Oh Lord) if this will not, what will? for the greater part of that ſix years *I* lived without Prayer and Reading the Scripture, but ſeldom miſſed hearing by reaſon of my civil education; and as to Prayer, (but why ſhould *I* call it ſo) ſcarce ever did *I* deſire that the Lord ſhould hear me; nay, *I* did often in my heart deſire to the contrary, nay more, when *I* have been upon my Knees, and my Conſcience hath conſtrained me to ſay Prayer, *I* have ſuddenly received an inward motion to this effect, that God at that time was a minding other affairs, and that then *I* might to Bed, and He not mind me; at which motion *I* did, and ſo left off for that time, and at all times performed them againſt my will; Oh horrible

Blaſphe-

Blaſphemy, what, not God ſee; Oh it was a wonder of wonders, that God ſhould then have endured to ſee me any longer out of Hell: (Oh infinite patience) as for reading *I* got little good by it, and deſired to get leſs, and as for hearing, *I* muſt confeſs that thoſe Arrows ſhot at a venture, God did cauſe them ſo many times to hit, yea, and pierce too, that it buſied both me, and the Devil to get them out again, and to heal the wound; but uſually *I* fixed my mind upon ſomewhat elſe, ſo that *I* ſeldome let any ſentence ſink too deep into my heart; yea, once the Devil and my own wicked heart did ſo far prevail, that I was fully reſolved, and in plain, but damnable terms, *I* did even curſe God, and as it were bid defiance to all his Ordinances, and did rejoyce that *I* had my tongue and conſcience ſo much at command; (Oh, and how can *I* hold my Pen to write this! wherefore do *I* not fall down, and become nothing before the Lord of Glory, againſt whom thus *I* have blaſphemed; but truly I would not have revealed this, had *I* not ſuch a place as the 12. of *Matthew*, and the 31 *Verſe*, to make to for a refuge.) After this *I* was wont to put that ſolemn Ordinance of Prayer to do the ſaddeſt ſervice in the world, and that frequently, (O pitty, pitty it had ſuch a cruel Maſter,) and that was, I uſed it not to help me to deſtroy ſin, but made it a greater cauſe and means of my ſinning; for I had got the damnable Art (as they ſay, the Papiſts have at this day, only I did not get ſo much by it as their Father-Confeſſors doth) that if *I* had ſaid but two or three ſhort

Ejacu-

Ejaculations, not with half the devotion that a *Pater noſter* is ſaid. yea, *I* ſay, *I* had got that curſed Art to reſiſt all gripes of Conſcience, and to ſin freely for a Moneth or more; and when Conſcience would let me alone no longer, then to Prayer again. Oh Adamantine heart, or rather ſtone, that canſt hold out to write theſe things, and not to quake and tremble! And now, *De his quid dicam*? theſe are the *Peccata peccatorum*, but what, is that ſoul ſtill alive that hath done theſe things? what, ſhall a poor worm curſe God, and not die? what, blaſpheme the Ordinances of the Almighty, and ſtill live? ſure the Jealouſie of a Holy God will not ſuffer ſuch a wretch to be in his ſight: But tell me, is this Man alive? or hath the Earth ſwallowed him up? or the flames of Hell caught hold of him? certainly had he thus offended his fellowworms, they could not have born it, and can *I* think that God will ſuffer ſuch a Man, nay rather Devil incarnated, to live in his ſight? O my ſoul, make anſwer, what alive? yes, yes; but how is he? hath he not his conſcience ſeared? and is not his condemnation ſealed within himſelf? and what, doth he not look with horrour and amazement for the great Day of the Lord? No, my hopes are to the contrary: Nay, *I* hope, and not without cauſe, that him hath the Lord ſet apart for himſelf, and to his poor ſoul hath he ſhewed ſuch mercies, that it will make all that hear of it to admire, and to ſay, What is man that thou ſhouldeſt be mindful of him? but that the Lord ſhould pity ſuch a loathſome Creature as this, and ſhould ſay to ſuch a vile brat

then wallowing in its blood, live; Oh come, come unto me all ye that fear the Lord; O come unto me, and *I* will tell you what he hath done for my ſoul; he that is Mighty hath done for me great things, yea almoſt incredible things, and Holy is his Name.

Min. Well (poor ſoul) *I* will no longer detain thee concerning theſe things, but now you having given me a very doleful account of your long convictions, yet ſtill lying bound with the chains of ſin, and under the command of Satan, which doubtleſs had it gone no further, but you had ended your life before the Lord had turned your convictions into converſion, it would have proved ſuch a worm, that would to all Eternity have gnawed thy conſcience, ſo that the pains would have been intollerable; but (bleſſed be God) *I* am in great hopes to hear that from you, which will put me out of fear, and give me cauſe to admire the goodneſs and power of God: Be very careful to keep your heart from pride, and not to attribute any thing to your own goodneſs, but to admire the grace of God, and give glory to him, and him alone.

Conv. Oh (dear friend) for ſo *I* will call you, and all that gives me counſel about the good of my never dying ſoul, *I* am glad that the Lord hath put this into your heart, and *I* do beg your Prayers to God, that he would ſtill humble me more and more; for *I* am ſure pride is a weed that will grow in the beſt Garden, much more in mine, which is a barren, yet weedy ſoil; but *I* have not done with all my ſoul-abaſing conſiderations, for when you have heard all

(which

(which I through the grace of God am to declare unto you) you will then ſay, I have more cauſe to be humbled than ever; therefore pride being ſuch an Enemy, I will earneſtly requeſt you, that when you hear me ſay any thing which doth ſavour of my own good, and not purely of God's Glory, that you would reprove me, and make me clear my meaning to you.

Min. I have ſtill more cauſe to bleſs God for you, in that you do ſo much ſuſpect your own heart, which is deſperately wicked and deceitful. And now to our preſent purpoſe; what reaſon have you to think, that your converſion was more effectually begun to be wrought upon you, when you was about eighteen years of Age.

Conv. Oh, I have great cauſe to think ſo; for then the Lord was pleaſed to work ſuch a work in me, that had it been told me before, I could not in any wiſe have believed it.

Min. And now, what do you think to be the firſt cauſe that moved you to ſet your face Sionward?

Conv. About two Moneths before I ſaw the ſinfulneſs of ſin, even then when I was to every good word and work a Reprobate, and did deny no ſin, becauſe it was ſin, although I might out of ſome ſelf ends, as to deny theft, whoredom, drunkenneſs, and ſuch like; not that theſe in themſelves were ſo deteſtable to me, but for fear of outward trouble I did not practiſe them; but being engaged in a great ſin, which was gaming, which ſome may ſcruple, whether it may be a ſin or no; but to me I am ſure it was the occaſi-

occaſion of many great ſins, as to cauſe me to ſwear and forſwear, and to lye, and cheat in great meaſure; and truly I think my heart at that time was ſo deſperately wicked, that doubtleſs, had not an Almighty Power pittied me, I ſhould even have pawned my ſoul, for the obtaining of what I then deſired, then in a paſſion I made a preſumptuous vow, that I would leave off that ſport for one year; this was about *November*, or *December*, which for a little time I kept; and now obſerve the great ſubtilty of the Devil in this particular, for no ſooner was it the firſt day of *January*, but preſently I was told that my vow was out of date, and that it ſignified nothing; and they being my carnal friends that told me, I was willing to make my conſcience ſubmit, ſo that I ſoon embraced my old ſport again, and did plainly lay my ſelf open to the wrath of God for ſuch a great ſin; yet I could not ſo much charm my conſcience, but it would often accuſe me for it; but it was not many weeks after, but I engaged as deeply in the ſame ſin of gaming as before (and now hear and admire, for even now will appear ſuch love, as never any was ever ſenſible of, but ſuch as have felt it) having been at the loſing hand, the ſeaſon of the Night calling me away, I left off, but much troubled, and about five in the Morning I awakened, and then there was a pleaſant lightneſs upon my ſpirit, as if it had been refreſhed after great trouble; what this meant, I could not tell, yet could not but take ſpecial notice of it, that I who went to Bed much diſſatisfied and perplexed, ſhould, when I awaked, ſeem to

be ſo much comforted, and my ſleep for a little time departed from me, and certainly I had ſome deep thoughts, which now I cannot remember; but the reſult of them came to this, I did then engage my ſelf by a freſh vow, that the next morning I would play ſo, as to venture about two ſhillings, and if I loſt that, then not to play any more for ſuch a certain time, and to my beſt remembrance, (for as I would not add, ſo I would not diminiſh, and ſo rob God of his glory, and my poor ſoul of comfort) I did at that time lift up my heart to God (but with what affections I cannot tell, I hope not without great ſhame) to crave his aid, that I might be enabled to keep my great vow; and ſo when the time came that I was to venture my mony, which I thought very long, with great chearfulneſs I went to play, being very willing, and I think deſirous to loſe, which was ſoon accompliſhed according to my hopes; which when it was ended, I cannot ſay what I thought, or how my heart worked, but as I think that very Day my heart was ſomewhat troubled by what follows; for I having loſt a great part of that in which my heart ſo much delighted, and idolized as its God, and reſted in as its ultimate end, I could not find reſt in it as formerly; and ſo being much troubled, I went to peruſe ſome toyes that I had by me, and amongſt them there was one Jewel, which the Lord was pleaſed to put into my hand, (which was a Book intituled, *The Crumbs of Comfort*) the which, when I felt my heart ſomewhat inclined to peruſe, I was much perplexed within my ſelf, and could not but wonder

wonder what manner of ſalutation this ſhould be; and now I hope I have great cauſe to acknowledge that the hand of God was in all this; But I will not on this account any ways turn aſide, but go on as my own heart and conſcience now witneſſeth to me, and I hope the Spirit of God likewiſe; and ſo very deſirous I was to know the meaning of this dark providence, as then it appeared to me to be; that more or leſs for two days together I often peruſed more of the Book, but my heart was little affected to any particular thing, and yet I was troubled more and more within me, and could find no reſt for my poor ſoul; and in leſs than a Weeks time, I think about the end of two or three Days, the more I read, I began to have more deep thoughts, and heart amazing conſiderations, which began to make me exceedingly troubled, and much caſt down, about the ſtate and condition of my poor captive ſoul, which as I told you before, was almoſt ſunk into the bottom of the bottomleſs Sea of God's wrath, from which there is no redemption, with the weight of its inſupportable ſins; And now what the chief actings of my ſoul were I cannot tell; but ſure I am that my trouble did increaſe yet more and more, and I hope it was for my ſins; for I do well remember, that within very few Days, or rather Hours after, the ſence of my ſins came into my mind, and the ſight of them was ſo clear, and the number of them ſo numberleſs, and their aggravations ſo weighty, and the nature of them ſo deteſtable, that what I then felt I cannot now poſſibly declare. O where was I?

certainly had I been ſurprized with the greateſt Enemies in the World, and my life in the greateſt danger, I could not have been more troubled, and had I been afflicted with all the tortures that Man could have deviſed, I ſhould not have been more tormented; nay, I think if my deceitful heart did not deceive me, that had I been in Hell amongſt thoſe infernal fiends, and had heard the yellings and howlings of thoſe damned wretches, I think I could not have been much more affrighted, for then I did look upon my ſoul to be within a hairs breadth of Eternal miſery, and oh the condition I ſaw my ſelf then in, is unutterable, had there not been an everlaſting arm of power and mercy underneath, I ſhould undoubtedly have followed the ſteps of *Cain* or *Judas*; but O bleſſed and admired be Free Grace: and why Me, Lord, why Me? O Love, Love, Love, even Love unſpeakable, yea Love unutterable; and further, in this my trouble the Lord was ſo far pleaſed to pitty and ſhew mercy to my poor ſoul, that my ſoul had not very long laboured under this inſupportable burthen of her great and mighty ſins, but I perceived a door of hope as it were unlatched and ſomewhat open, and that if I would but in good earneſt turn to God, that yet it was not too late, and that there was hope in *Iſrael* concerning this thing, which conſideration did not a little comfort my poor ſoul; and then further it pleaſed the Lord to open my heart to viſit one, who I thought might do me much good, and I judged him fit to be acquainted with my condition, in that I hoped he feared the Lord,

(and

(and by the way let me tell you that I did at that time unſpeakably love all ſuch, even more than my own relations, with humility let it be ſpoken) and when I was with him, he joyfully received me, and declared unto me many comfortable things, which (through grace) did not a little raiſe my dejected ſpirit, and he then lent me a book, which the Lord at that time opened my heart to ask for (which was *Drex d. Eternit.*) and truly upon the peruſal of that Treatiſe, I think, nay I am ſure, the burden of my ſins ſeemed to be renewed, and I cannot expreſs that unſpeakable ſorrow which I then had in my poor ſoul, by reaſon of all its mighty ſins, and truly I hope the mercy of God was not a little cauſe of my trouble, to think that I ſhould have none to offend and kick againſt, but thoſe bowels, yea thoſe tender bowels of pitty and compaſſion, which had ſo long yearned over my poor ſoul, and had ſo long ſhielded off the ſtroke of Juſtice, which was ſo long hanging over my provoking head; and then, oh then I did unſpeakably deſire the pardon of my ſins, and then did feel the burden of them ſo unſupportable; that *I* did earneſtly beg of the Lord, that they might be laid upon the Lord Jeſus, who was able to bear them, and did endeavour by earneſt Prayers to obtain a ſmile from God, in and through Jeſus Chriſt; for out of Chriſt he was a terrible God, and a conſuming Fire, and ſo *I* forth-with reſolved to take up with all outward duties, as Prayer, Reading, Hearing, Conferring with good Chriſtians, and *I* cannot but let you know that the firſt Sermon *I* heard

in this condition was out of 1 *Tim.*1.15. where it is ſaid, that *Chriſt came into the World to ſave ſinners*, of whom *I*, not *Paul* only, but *I*, even *I* am chief, and ſo I went on through fear and trembling, and not without ſome joy and hope; that the Lord who had begun a good work in me, would finiſh it in his good time; which God grant for Chriſt his ſake.

Min. And is this which you have ſpoken from your own experience, is it indeed, as I hope it is, then I can no longer forbear, but ſay with good *Zacharias*, Bleſſed be the Lord God of *Iſrael*, who hath viſited and redeemed his People, and amongſt them thy poor ſoul, and now I ſay again take heed of ſpiritual pride, think very lowly of thy ſelf, and give glory to God: And now (Dear Heart) give me leave for the good of thy Eternal welfare to examine thee of ſome things which thou haſt touched upon in the laſt Diſcourſe, that ſo I may be aſſured, that that work which the Lord hath begun in thee, may prove as a Tree planted and rooted in thy renewed heart, by the Spirit of God, and not of thine own ſetting: And for the accompliſhing of which weighty work, it will be convenient to enquire what fruit it hath ſince born, for the Tree may be known by its fruit, Therefore in brief, what haſt thou found in thy heart concerning ſin?

Conv. Sin! Truly I am not able now to expreſs that unſpeakable bitterneſs I then found in it; Oh how did I hate it, and purſue it with the greateſt zeal and deteſtation poſſible; O how did my heart riſe at the very appearance of

of it, and truly if it did not very greatly deceive me, I think I hated it more than death it ſelf, and ſhould have choſen death, rather than wilfully committed the leaſt known ſin; and if there had been no Hell, yet as I have often ſaid, ſin ſhould have been my Hell, and holineſs my Heaven.

Min. I am glad to hear what thou haſt ſaid, but what ſins were they thou ſo hatedſt, it may be they were great and dreadful ſins, as Blaſphemy and Murder, *&c.* But what didſt thou think of heart ſins, and evil motions, which I am ſure would much beſet thee?

Conv. Oh, if I knew my own heart, theſe were the greateſt Enemies that I had to encounter; theſe were they that (like unto ſo many *Goliahs*) bid defiance to what Chriſt had wrought in my poor ſoul, and did endeavour to retake the Fort-Royal of my heart. which the Lord was about to make a Temple for his glorious Image to dwell in, and Oh bleſſ d be Free Grace, and let all that hear of this, ſtand and admire and give glory to God.

Min. The Lord preſerve this bleſſed enmity ſtill more and more in thy heart: and now tell me which way thou wenteſt about to engage againſt, and ſo to overcome theſe great *Goliahs*, though commonly known by the name of peccadilloes?

Conv. Oh now, now you come very neer me, and this even pierces between the bone and marrow, and the Lord who is the ſearcher of hearts, and knoweth the thoughts and ſtings of every ſoul, give me underſtanding in this

point, that I may ſay nothing, but what I really found in my own ſoul; Oh then I did preſume too much upon my own ſtrength, and did not lay them at the feet of Chriſt, whom then I hoped I took for my Lord and King, and did not (as I fear) wholly depend upon his Kingly Power, which is to overcome and ſubdue all thoſe enemies which riſe up in the hearts of his Children, and make war againſt him, and would not that he ſhould rule over them, for ſurely had I thus done, he would not have ſuffered them ſo often to aſſault me, and even ſometimes overcome me, as I ſhall (God willing) make clear to you by and by.

Min. Still I have great cauſe to admire the goodneſs of God to thy poor ſoul, in that he hath been pleaſed now to open thy eyes to ſee this thy great miſtake, which doubtleſs had not the Lord in time revealed it to thee, it would have proved a ſore evil, and it may be thou mighteſt not have ſeen it before it had been too late, and now tell me which way thou wenteſt about to deſtroy thy ſins, ſeeing thou waſt ignorant in great meaſure in applying the death of Chriſt to kill them?

Conv. The chiefeſt inſtruments that I uſed in this work was Prayer, and ſometimes Faſting, which I found very powerful to batter down the ſtrong holds of Satan in my poor ſoul, for which doubtleſs I was not to be blamed, if ſo be that I had uſed them only as a means to have raiſed up my heart to Chriſt, and ſo as they were appointed of God to be the way and means whereby I might have recourſe to him, who alone

lone is able for ſo great a work, but woe to my ignorant and proud heart, that would not totally ſubmit to God, but idolized Prayer, and Repentance, and Faſting, as if theſe had been the Captains of the Souls Salvation, whereas they are but empty in themſelves, and nothing worth, no more than as they lead me to Chriſt, who alone is the Captain and horn of my Salvation?

Min. And now I think it will not be amiſs to let me hear how you carried your ſelf in the great duty of Prayer, and how ſoon you entred upon the duty?

Conv. The Lord was pleaſed within two or three Days after my firſt trouble to incline my heart to ſeek him by Prayer, which I uſed conſtantly twice a Day, beſides ſome private Ejaculations and ſighs between whiles, and I will now tell you, that for a little time, about a Moneth or two I was little ſatisfied, no longer than I was engaged in ſuch work, as Reading, Hearing, deep Meditation, but eſpecially Prayer, and theſe, oh theſe were the Phyſitians that I look upon ſo much, to work ſo great a cure upon my ſoul, that none but Chriſt that great Phyſitian could do, and truly the beſt of the Phyſitians were ſo full of ill humors themſelves, as pride, ſelf-confidence *&c.* that without the Phyſick of Chriſt's blood to purge and purifie them, they would have ſtunk in the Noſthrils of a holy and pure God, as I am afraid they often did.

Min. Now you have given in an account about ſin, I would gladly hear what account you can

can give about the ways of holineſs and of grace, and how you began to make your progreſs in this road?

Conv. I muſt be but very brief here, for I have much to ſay about other things, but I ſhall, as the Lord ſhall enable me, ſatisfie you in this, as I told you before; when the burthen of my ſin firſt came upon me, that then, and likewiſe in the ſix years of my convictions, I was fully convinced of the neceſſity of living a holy life, and of the beauty of Holineſs, and that without it, there would be no ſalvation; for without Holineſs none ſhall ſee the Lord: And upon this account I alſo earneſtly beſought the Lord by Prayer, and Hearing, and reading good Books, which the Lord did mightily incline my heart to do, and ſo every day, I did more and more deſire Holineſs, and did earneſtly thirſt after the *I*mage of God to be renewed upon my heart, ſo that in ſhort *I* found no reſt any way, but what *I* got by living holily, and abſtaining from ſin, and as my weak Phyſitians, *I* mean my Prayers, Hearing, Reading, Meditation, Vows, Reſolutions, *&c.* *I* ſay, as theſe was able to apply comfort to me, ſo *I* had it and no longer, being ignorant *of the life of faith in Chriſt*, and truly they proved very bad comforters, and as *I* told you, they wanted Chriſt's blood to procure acceptation in the eyes of a pure and holy God, which will regard them with favour, no otherwiſe than as they are preſented to him ſprinkled with the blood of his Son.

Min. Methinks you ſeem to ſpeak much againſt

gainſt theſe duties, and againſt holineſs, as if they were not altogether neceſſary to be imbraced, do you not?

Conv. Oh no (God forbid) *I* hope *I* ſhall never ſo far ſpeak againſt them as to neglect them in the leaſt, but this *I* have ſaid, that *I* may not look upon them any further, than as they lead me to Chriſt, for truly *I* have found nothing in the World ſo much hindered me of comfort, (wilful ſin only excepted) as in laying ſo great a ſtreſs upon duties, for certainly, had *I* laid my foundation ſure upon the Rock of Chriſt, and not all upon my own righteouſneſs, *I* ſhould never have been ſo much ſhaken, and as *I* may ſay almoſt overturned with the aſſaults of ſin and Satan. but he would have upheld me with his everlaſting Armes, that *I* ſhould have been able long ago, to have triumphed in his merits, over all the aſſaults that Satan and my own heart made againſt me.

Min. How long did you live upon the ſtock of your duties, before the Lord was pleaſed to let you ſee your errour, and how was your condition all this while as you thought your ſelf?

Conv. *I* lived ſo about three years or more, and in that time *I* had ſome ſad declinings indeed; every day almoſt *I* loſt my God, and the evidences of his love, ſo as *I* thought my ſelf happy no longer than when *I* could perform duties with great zeal, and with ſtrong affections, and then oftentimes *I* could have been willing to have dyed (as *I* thought) my heart did ſo rejoyce in them; but when my heart was ſomewhat dead and flat, then *I* was at a great loſs,

and

and could find out no reſt for the ſole of my foot.

Min. This which you have ſaid ſeems to me to be a little ſtrange; why, where was your faith all this while? you told me before, that you durſt not look to God but through Chriſt, and you ſeemed then as you went along to make Chriſt your Hope and Saviour, and then how do you mean you did not reſt in him?

Conv. This is ſomewhat hard to anſwer, but *I* hope you will pardon my weakneſs, and I will tell you as plain as I can, (and that only as my heart and Conſcience witneſſeth, and not to take the help of any Book to open it to me, that ſo I may with more humble confidence ſay that theſe things I have ſet down no otherwiſe but as my own ſpirit by the aſſiſtance of God's Spirit dictated to me) and now I will tell you what I mean by what *I* have ſaid, *I* hope *I* looked upon Chriſt to be a compleat Saviour in every reſpect, and *I* ſaw my great need of his blood to procure my pardon for my ſins, and I knew that it was only from his grace that I was in any meaſure ſanctified, and by this I hope I laid all my ſins upon him, and durſt not in the leaſt think of Anſwering for them my ſelf before God, and ſeemed to give him the glory in reſpect to any work of Holineſs in my heart, and ſo I did highly prize him, and greatly delight in him, and earneſtly deſired to love him, and more and more to ſerve him, and ſo *I* acted faith for three years, but all this while I was not throughly convinced of the inſufficiency of my own righteouſneſs, ſo as to lay that at Chriſt's feet, neither

neither could *I* ſuppoſe it that one might be juſtified by anothers righteouſneſs, but *I* hoped that becauſe *I* was not altogether as bad as others, (as *I* thought,) therefore *I* ſhould fare better than others, and ſo *I* mixed my own merits with Chriſts, and never came ſo far out of my ſelf, as to caſt my righteouſneſs as well as my ſins, at his feet, and now what abundant cauſe have *I* to be humbled, and to lye very low before God, and ſtill more and more to admire the infinite mercy and patience of God, O that *I*, who after *I* was much enlightened, and had abundantly taſted and ſeen how good and gracious the Lord was, *I* ſay that after all his unſpeakable mercies to me, how he brought me out of my *Ægyptian* bondage of ſin, and looſened me from many ſtrong holds of Satan, and brought me ſo near to his Fathers boſome, that *I* was wont to be many times almoſt raviſhed, with the fore-thoughts of that joy *I* did hope for in Heaven. Oh that after he had paſſed me over the red Sea, and when many of mine enemies were dead and beaten back, and that after he had tryed me a little in the Wilderneſs of this World, then he would have brought me ſafe into *Canaan*; O that *I* ſhould be ſo diſingenious as to ſet up a Calf (*I* mean my own Righteouſneſs,) and Worſhip that, and ſhould do what *I* did more to advantage ſelf than Chriſt: Oh *I* ſay again, what a wonder it is that ever he was pleaſed to let me ſee my folly; and Oh if he ſhould not have done it, yet in this particular, how inexcuſable had *I* been, which will appear in the next Anſwer.

Min.

Min. Now let me know when, and in what manner, the Lord was pleaſed to magnifie his grace in convincing you of the inſufficiency of your own Righteouſneſs, and of the reſting in duties.

Conv. I will likewiſe make this as plain to you, as the Lord ſhall enable me (ſo that *I* may not be found guilty of a ſpiritual lye) and to the beſt of my remembrance about four months after my powerful call, when as I thought I was aſſuredly in a moſt happy condition, having paſſed through abundant of tryals and temptations, and I began to find them ſomewhat to flee before me, (of which you ſhall hear anon more at large) then, Oh then the Lord was pleaſed to put into my hand a little Book, Entituled *The Chriſtians great Intereſt*, by Mr. *Gathry*, which when I peruſed, *I* found *I* was much concerned in it, and was ſomewhat troubled, but it ſo violently accuſed me of my *Dalilah* righteouſneſs, which I loving too well to ſee as I thought abuſed, with a ſmall ſigh or the like, I commanded it to depart, and not to dare to come and controul my Idol-ſelf any more, yet it made my way ſo plain before me, that I could not withſtand it: a little while after, the Lord was pleaſed to put into my hand another Book, for which *I* have abundant cauſe to bleſs God, (which was the *Sincere Convert*) and reading the latter part of that which treats concerning carnal Confidence and reſting in Duties, (all which did very much concern me) *I* was very much troubled, and began to queſtion my eſtate a little concerning duties, but truly I took ſo little delight

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in this, that I ſoon laid it by, and returned it to the place from whence it came, and likewiſe *I* had other Books, as Mr. *Baxter's Self-denyal*, which I read part of with much delight, as in reference in denying ſelf-pleaſures, and ſinful recreations, and vain company, *&c.* all theſe yielded comfort to me, becauſe *I* found, that *I* did really deſire to deny my ſelf all theſe, and made it a great ground of comfort to me, that *I* could ſo earneſtly deſire their deſtruſtions; but when *I* came to the denyal of ſelf righteouſneſs, this was a hard ſaying, and ſelf would not bear it, but away *I* went to thoſe Books where I could find out as I thought, a way to Heaven by my own working, and thoſe that treated moſt of a holy life, was the moſt pleaſing to me, but when *I* read concerning Chriſt, or heard him taught to me by his Miniſters; (for although *I* have omitted how my heart was in hearing, yet *I* would deſire you to include that, and to ſuppoſe that my heart was in that, as in Reading or Conferring with reſpect to the ſubject) *I* ſay, when *I* heard Chriſt taught by his Miniſters, either in a Pulpit or a Book, *I* much delighted in that *I* heard or read, but when Juſtification alone by Faith in Chriſts Merits, and living by faith upon a naked Chriſt; (as peradventure *I* might be put too upon a ſick bed, by reaſon of a violent diſeaſe, or the like; that *I* could not have ſtrength of body, nor compoſure of mind to perform duties, as in a Feaver or a fit of the Stone or Gout, *&c.*) *I* ſay when theſe Noble and Heaven-born Myſteries were treating on, *I* was much to ſeek, and could take

but

but little comfort from them, and so *I* went on from duty to duty, and if at any time *I* found my heart dead, and could for that day or week, or month it may be, find any comfort from them, then *I* lived in hopes, that although *I* found not all well at present, yet it would not long continue so with me, and so in some time *I* recovered life and comfort again, *I* say *I* continued thus for the space of above three years; And now *I* will declare one thing which did more trouble me than ordinary, and that was in *August* last, 67. it happened that as *I* was visiting a Patient, (and for this thing in particular *I* have cause to bless God that he placed me in this my calling) whom we supposed the Lord would take away, at that very time there came Dr. *B.* to perform as was thought one of the last duties he had to do for her, and amongst his discourse and advice, he bad her be sure to lay all her sins upon Christ, which *I* liked very well, but withall that she should lay all her own Righteousness at his feet, and not at all to trust to any good she had in her self, but wholly to rely upon the merits of Christ, which when *I* heard, my heart rose much against what he said, and did much oppose his advice, and thought it not at all convenient to be spoken, and doubtless had *I* been in her condition (I mean so near death, as it was thought she was) and he had advised me to the same thing, and had cleared it to me, oh what a dreadful visitation had that been, surely it would have put my soul into such a dreadful Agony of confusion, if not despair, that surely I should have dyed a se-

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cond death before I knew the pangs of the first; But Oh, I say again, who can hear of this, and not to be overcome with soul ravishing admirations of the love, and goodness, and patience of God towards such a wretched nothing as I was; that ever he should so long forbear from destroying that Soul with Eternal damnation, that would not with the cords of love be drawn to accept of so clear Salvation; but the Lord was pleased still to keep this upon my heart: And although I was somewhat troubled, but as before, again I went to my old Physitians, and took a small Pill of Prayer, composed of a little fear and humiliation; but no sooner it got into my heart, but there it was guilt with pride, and so again became pleasant to me, and then I thought all was well; and I do desire earnestly that by this, God may be much glorified; and again, methinks I find my heart so mightily inclined to go on in this work, which at your request (you may remember) I was so unwilling to undertake, that I have great hopes there may be the hand of God in it, and that it was he that put it into your heart to request it of me, and I pray God it may be his glory alone that may move me to it, and not any self pride, truly you may say I have great cause to fear, and not to trust my own heart any more, and the Lord preserve this Jealousie more and more in me: but to my present purpose, and this which I am about to say, might have proved a great disadvantage to me, but I doubt not but the hand of God was in it, although I saw it not at that present, but since I have, and in short it was thus,

a little while after my laſt diſcourſe, as I think my heart was drawn after the vanities of this World more than ordinary, and at the time I likened the eſtate of my ſoul, to the condition of a fair Virgin that had many Suitors, but one ſhe would love and chooſe above the reſt, but ſhe being not yet married, they all make out for her love, which is no ſmall trouble to her, and doth ſomewhat make her doubt which ſhe ſhall have; but ſo ſoon as ſhe is married to one of them, then ſhe dares not think of entertaining the others upon that account; even ſo I looked upon my poor ſoul, and that if ſhe was but ſolemnly married to Chriſt, (I mean in the Sacrament) then ſhe durſt not ſo much as think of embracing either ſin or the World, or the Devil, but ſtill righteous ſelf lay all this while ſecure: Upon theſe and ſuch like conſiderations, I went to a faithful Divine to ask advice of him concerning this great duty, and when I was with him, he examined me why, and how I came to embrace Religion, and when I had given him the heads only of the firſt account concerning compunction, he asked me who I might thank for all this, but I being ſomewhat ſlow of anſwer, he told me Chriſt, and him alone, and gave me ſome ſhort but ſweet advice, inviting me to be a gueſt at his Maſters Table (which was the intention of my going, which was more than he then knew on) and ſo diſmiſſed me, and oh how did I then rejoyce that I was found worthy to be invited to ſo great a banquet, and now how did I think my condition unqueſtionable and nothing troubled me but want of aſſurance

to

to perſevere, and although the *Doctor* gave me a great caution to lay all upon Chriſt, and not any thing upon ſelf, as I now conſider, but yet my eyes were ſo blind and my heart ſo deceitful, that I ſoon forgot it; and ſo I prepared my heart as well as I could, and ſo addreſſed my ſelf to the Lords Table, and was, ſo far as I can underſtand, made more welcome, I am ſure than I deſerved; and then I did feel the Lord with his cords of love, drawing hard at my poor ſoul, and ſo I exerciſed my love upon Chriſt, (and ſo far as I know) enjoyed ſweet communion with him; but this laſted no longer, than my heart was enlarged in ſecret duties; but when they departed then my ſoul mourned, and could not be ſatisfied with a naked Chriſt, whileſt my enlargements returned again to me, and by this I perceive I reſted in duties, and not in Chriſt, and now once more as ſhort as *I* can, and then *I* will conclude with this; but *I* cannot be ſo ſhort, but *I* muſt a little ſtand and admire at the unſpeakable long-ſuffering patience of God, and oh that you would help me in this matter, for *I* profeſs *I* am much aſhamed, and deſire to be more, of my own heart, that it ſhould be barren of praiſes to that God, that hath done ſure as much or more for my poor ſoul, as to any ſince the Creation of the World; Oh that Chriſt who could have raiſed a Child out of the very ſtones, that would have done far more for him than *I* have or can do; Oh *I* ſay that he who could with one look have looked me into Hell, ſhould ſo long ſtand at the door of my heart, and knock till his head was filled with dew, and

his Locks with the drops of the Night; Oh that he ſhould ſtand weeping, knocking, begging, and waiting, and crying, Open to me; Oh that his tears ſhould begg, and his groans knock, and that his patience ſhould tarry and wait, and all ſhould ſo long cry, Oh open to me, open to me, Oh that ſin and ſelf ſhould lodg in my heart and Chriſt wait ſo long at the Door; Oh, that I ſhould carry damnation within, and let ſalvation wait without, and now I ſhould go about to offer praiſes to God for this; Oh, I wiſh that I could, but truly I cannot as I would, Oh I cannot, and I humbly deſire to acknowledge the barrenneſs of my heart in this, and am ſilent, and now pray lend me your patience but a very little, and I fear your heart will be ſtreightned with praiſes to God as well as mine; for now the Lord was pleaſed to encline my heart to read part of two Books, one of the two was that which I above two years before rejected, I will name them, (*viz.* the Sincere Convert and ſound Believer, both by one Author, *T. S.*) and when I was Reading concerning the Souls reſting in duties, and how hard a thing it was to forſake all its own good, and wholly to throw it ſelf upon a naked Chriſt, and then concerning the nature of true humiliation I was much troubled, and my thoughts were much perplexed, inſomuch that I thought to open my caſe to ſome Divine; but to this trouble another was added, which was that at that time the Lord was pleaſed to let me ſee my own nakedneſs ſo much, and that which I took to be a covering to it, made it ſeem to be much more

naked than I could have imagined it to be; that then I thought the more I prayed, the more I ſinned, and the more I Confeſſed and Repented, and Bewailed my own wretched Heart, eſpecially in the time of duty, the more I had cauſe to do ſo ſtill, and now I looked upon my ſelf in a moſt ſad and deſtitute condition, for how could I chooſe, when I ſaw my own goodneſs departing from me, which I idolized as the Rock of my Salvation, and when I ſaw ſuch a numberleſs number of ſins come afreſh into my mind, eſpecially in the time of duty, that it ſeemed to me, as if the Devil had conjured up all thoſe ſins that I thought was long before ſlain, and he himſelf had been their Captain, and had unawares aſſaulted me, and had taken my duty which I made then the Captain of my Salvation priſoner, and *I* alone left to encounter with them without the leaſt weapon to defend my poor ſoul, and oh had theſe and the pangs of death met together, Oh what horror and amazement would there have been; but bleſſed be God it was before; now to ſay, how long *I* was in this caſe, *I* cannot well tell; but *I* ſaw my idol God ſo accuſed and condemned, and my hatred to him was ſo great, that *I* hope *I* did deſire never to ceaſe my earneſt Prayers to the true God, that he would have this Uſurper executed, and likewiſe *I* did, as *I* was able, earneſtly begg of the Lord that he would give me ſtrength to reſiſt him, ſo that he might never ſit upon his Throne more, and then *I* did ſee (through admiring Grace) the want of Chriſt more than ever, not only to cover my

ſins, but my righteouſneſs too; then Oh then *I* began to prize Chriſt more than ever, oh then *I* did deſire to ſay from my heart, none but Chriſt, none but Chriſt; Oh all the whole World for Chriſt, yea ten thouſand Worlds for a Chriſt; and then *I* did deſire to ſay with *Luther*, that if *I* was able to keep the whole Moral Law, *I* would not truſt to this for Juſtification, *I* would vail and ſtoop to Chriſt's merits, and now *I* did find it a more hard thing by far, to get out of my ſelf, and from truſting to duty, and wholly by faith to rely upon Chriſt's merits, than ever *I* found it to leave ſin, and then me-thoughts *I* found it a very hard thing to be a Chriſtian, and that *I* was paſſive all along, and was not able to move a ſtep further than the Lord upheld and led me, and Oh that *I* could make the reſult of this great mercy plain unto you, truly (*I* bleſs God) *I* can ſay a little (but under this very trouble, my ſoul ever ſince hath groaned within me, and *I* do deſire that it may ſtill groan more and more, and never leave groaning, till its groans pierce the very Clouds, and ſound through Chriſt ſo loud into the ears of the Almighty, that for Chriſt his ſake, he would have pitty and compaſſion upon me, and would not ſuffer that Tyrant Self any longer in the leaſt to bear ſway in me, and that he would be pleaſed ſo to ſhew me my own unworthineſs, and the inſufficiency of all inherent goodneſs to ſtand me in the leaſt ſtead in matters of juſtification, that ſo *I* might prize Chriſt, and Chriſt alone, and rely wholly upon his Merits for pardon, life and ſalvation.) Now *I* will declare

clare to you how the Lord was pleased to deal with me; soon after I saw this my condition in resting in my own supposed goodness; Sacrament-Day being again near at hand, the Lord was pleased to incline my heart to ingage in that solemn and most Sacred duty, now having lost my supposed Wedding-Garment, in which *I* supposed my self to be very comely and much to be delighted in by Christ, and seeing my own nakedness and deformity so much, that *I* could not imagine how *I* should possibly be accepted of by Christ, that so my trouble and burden was so great that *I* found it almost insupportable, and fearing lest God's frowns, and my awakened Conscience should more and more seize upon me, especially at that sacred Ordinance, *I* say in this point *I* was more than *I* can think of amazed, and could not tell what to do; And now my dear Heavenly Father (who was always more ready to help than *I* to crave) did then doubtless wait to be gracious to my poor Soul, and did abundantly magnifie his grace to me; for now he was pleased to strike one Scripture very deep into my heart, which was as comfortable and as sure an Anchor as my poor laden Soul could be held by, and it was this, *Oh Israel thou hast destroyed thy self, but in me is thy help*, Hosea 13. 9. which Soul-Cordial Scripture seemed to me, as if *I* had heard the Lord speaking to me after this manner; Oh thou afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted, although thou hast so long grieved me, and provoked me to destroy thee, yet now, even now, if thou wilt endeavour to know, *I* say

even now in this thy day the things of thy peace; peradventure they may be found, but never look more for peace from any thing in thy ſelf, but wholly look up to him, who tells thee, although thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf, yet in me (if in any) is thy help found, and then further the Lord was pleaſed to put it into my heart to examine my humiliation more ſtrictly, which when I did, I ſuppoſed my heart never heretofore to have been truly humbled as it ought to have been, yet I hoped the Lord was about this great work now, by what I have before related, and my reaſon was, becauſe I never ſo far as I knew experimentally underſtood the meaning of ſome Scriptures, as then were opened more plainly to me, and they were ſuch as theſe; (And truly this was it that inclined my heart to partake afreſh of the Lords Supper) The whole need not a Phyſitian, but they that are ſick, and that Chriſt came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance, and concerning the Publican and Phariſee, and ſuch like; and in ſhort, although I had been ſick of ſin, yet never before, than of ſelf-righteouſneſs; now ſeeing my ſelf ſick as much of the one as of the other, therefore I hoped Chriſt would be my Phyſitian; and that in him my help ſhould ſoon be found, and thus I did endeavour to humble my ſelf, and to ſee my own vileneſs and ſickneſs more and more, and did in this much begg of the Lord, that he would ſtill humble me more and more, with a clear ſence of my own deformity and nakedneſs, that ſo I might, ſeeing my great need of Chriſt, more and more hunger

and

and thirſt after him, and ſo laying my ſoul proſtrated at Chriſts feet, and as I hope did really ſee my great want of him, and ſo would not depart any way from him, but reſolved that if I dyed *I* would dye there, and thus I argued with him, Whither ſhould I go but unto thee, thou haſt the words of Eternal Life, and although I be a Dog, yet thou haſt crumbs, Oh let not my hungry ſoul, famiſh for want of food; O, I dare not, Oh I will not depart, Oh Lord although I have deſtroyed my ſelf, yet Lord haſt not thou told me that in thee is my help found; O make good thy word unto thy ſervant in which thou haſt cauſed me to hope; and truly the Lord was not very long in making good his word to my poor ſoul, for then I wonderfully felt him drawing me up with the Cords of love, pitty and compaſſion; and at the ends of which Cords (for me to take the better hold, or I rather think that he might take the better hold of me) he was pleaſed to faſten ſuch Scriptures as theſe, *I* will name but three, for each Cord one, and a threefold Cord is not eaſily broken: the one was the 55th. of *Iſaiah*, and the firſt Verſe, *Hoe every one that thirſteth, come ye to the Waters, and drink, and he that hath no money*, yea that was it I waited for, (for I bleſs God at that time I hope *I* had none) *come ye buy and eat, yea come buy Wine and Milk* (Oh Bread and Water was too good for me, and more than I deſerved) *without Money and without Price*, Oh theſe was ſweet to ſuch a poor Soul as mine was, and then another was this, *Revel.*22 17. *And whoſoever will, let him take of the Water of Life freely*,

hearken

hearken Soul, Freely, Oh Chriſt will not be bought with any thing the Creature can give, Oh no, all is grace, and then the other which worked the moſt powerfully upon my heart was Matth. 11. 28. *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you reſt*; and therefore, I now ſeeing my ſelf weary with my own duties, and heavy laden with my own righteouſneſs, as well as with my ſins, which before I could not ſo clearly ſay, oh how ſweet, how ſweet, how incomparably ſweet was this word Come; and ſo upon theſe accounts, the Lord was pleaſed to enable me, to ſee how, then, even then, he was pleaſed to call, as it were to my poor Soul in particular to come unto him, and ſubmit to his grace; and ſo with great hungrings and thirſtings after Chriſt to cover my poor Soul from the eye of a Juſt and Holy God through ſome fear, and as I hope with great humiliation (although not ſo great as *I* would have had it) with ſome hope that the Lord would meet me, and bleſs me: *I* approached to the ſolemn banquet where *I* did not only taſte and ſip a little, but obeyed as the Lord enabled me that great command, when he ſaid, drink, yea drink abundantly, oh my beloved; then, oh then *I* did earneſtly endeavour to make the eye of my Soul to ſee him, and my heart ſo embrace him, that from thenceforth *I* might fully ſatisfie my Soul with the enjoyment of him, and him alone, and not from any thing that ſelf or the World preſented to me; and now methought *I* was much comforted, and did endeavour from that time to this, to own nothing

thing for a comfort or cauſe of rejoycing, but as it lead me to Chriſt, who alone is the Author, and *I* hope the finiſher of my Faith, and the Horn of my Salvation; and with this Caution, *I* will conclude this tedious Diſcourſe, as *I* fear it may be to you(although to me through Grace very pleaſant) not that hereby *I* mean to neglect any duty whatſoever *I* know to be my duty, or think them indifferent whether they be performed or no; Oh no, *I* ſay again, God forbid, but this *I* deſire to do through grace, but not ſelf, (and the Lord of his infinite grace inable me, that *I* may ſo far honour and reſpect them, as *I* find them a means to carry me to Chriſt,) for which cauſe *I* think they were appointed, with reſpect to the glorifying of God, and ſuch like; and now if I know my own heart, and for fear it ſhould deceive me, I will begg of the Lord that when ever I hear I may hear for Chriſt, and whenever I pray I may more and more make clear my intereſt in Chriſt, and when-ever *I* perform any duty whatſoever, I may more and more get into Chriſt, and more out of my ſelf; And now you have heard all that the Lord hath (out of his abundant grace) enabled me (from what I have found, as I hope in great meaſure wrought in my own heart) to declare unto you, and for fear I ſhould in this weighty matter be guilty of a lye, and ſo delude my own Soul, I will with great humility acknowledge, that every particular in this latter clauſe (I mean in the Lords dealings with me ſince I firſt received the Sacrament) I cannot ſo fully clear as I would I could, but I hope *I* need

not

not to fear, but that I have felt all that I have ſpoken of working more or leſs upon my heart: but whether juſt in order as I have declared them, I cannot punctually ſay, but do earneſtly begg that the Lord Jeſus Chriſt would be ſo pleaſed, as to ſprinkle what I have ſaid with his own blood, and that whatever ſins of failings there may be in it through the pride or ignorance of my own heart, Oh I do earneſtly again beg of God, that for Chriſts ſake, he would look upon what I have done, ſo as to pardon all that is amiſs, and that he would in his due time open my eyes to ſee my errours, and to amend them; and now I do earneſtly beg your advice concerning theſe things, for as I ſaid before, my heart doth mourn within me, by reaſon of that intereſt ſelf got in me, and I now find it ſo very hard to be overcome; but I have already told you my earneſt deſires concerning this, and oh that *I* could prevail with you this once to allow me an intereſt in your Prayers, and for what doubtleſs you will know better than *I* can tell you, but eſpecially for this, that he who is the ſearcher of hearts, and knows the ſtate of every Soul better than it doth it ſelf, would be pleaſed (that if *I* be deceived for Chriſts ſake) to undeceive me, and grant that if *I* have not true grace, I may not think I have, and ſo be in a Fools Paradice, and that the Lord who is my heart-maker, would be my heart-ſearcher, and my heart-diſcoverer, and my heart-reformer, and that the Lord may ſo do, I ſhall not ceaſe to be an earneſt ſuitor at the Throne of Grace, ſo long as I am on this ſide the grave.

But

But what, becauſe all is not ſo clear as I could wiſh they were, ſhall I be caſt down, and my Soul diſquieted within me, as if *I* was ſorry that God hath been ſo much at work in my Soul, or as if an infinite *Jehovah* was not able to finiſh what he hath begun, and ſo rob God of his glory, and my poor Soul of comfort; Oh no, my Soul, theſe things ought not ſo to be, I fear there is much of ſelf in this who is ſomewhat troubled to ſee the glory of its Temple ſo much defaced, and its treachery ſo much found out, and ſo much out of favour, as never more to be embraced again; And is it ſo, is God indeed become my God, and can I indeed ſay with *Thomas, My Lord, and my God, my Chriſt, and my Saviour*; Oh *I* cannot forbear to ſay, Lord who is a God like unto thee, Oh God, there is no God beſides thee, and Oh what is Man, that God ſhould be mindful of him! and what am I, ſurely the worſt of men, that God ſhould ſo regard me; Oh that I could now, even now this once, from the bottom of my heart, bleſs and admire him; but oh what a dead and barren heart have I, that cannot worthily praiſe him; Oh my Soul bleſs the Lord, and all that is within me, bleſs his Holy Name, bleſs the Lord oh my Soul, and forget not all (nay not one of) his benefits: Oh if I had the tongue of an Angel, and all the Angels in Heaven to aſſiſt me in this great work, yet I ſay, we could never ſufficiently utter my dear Fathers praiſes; and now ſhall my faith triumph, and my heart be glad, and my glory rejoyce, but not in ſelf, or in any thing of my own, but in Him, and Him alone

alone, who is the God of my Salvation; Wonder oh Heavens, and be moved oh Earth at this great thing which the Lord hath wrought in my Soul, be astonished and even ravished with wonder, for the infinite breach is in a way to be made up, the offender to be appeased and God and my poor Soul to be reconciled; and oh my Soul, what if these be so already, or what if one had told thee of these things some five Years agone, certainly they would then have been too great for thy belief; but what, shall they now be so small as not to be worth thy praise (Oh disingenious Soul:) Oh Lord pardon my unthankfulness; Oh that all the Angels in Heaven should rejoyce and bless God for what he hath done for thee, even for thee, for my poor Soul; And what, canst not thou find in heart to endeavour to set forth his praises as much as thou art able, that so it may be known that at least thou desirest to give all the glory to God, and not to dare to take any to thy self? Oh my Soul, what sayest thou? What say I? Oh I say again not unto me, not unto me, but unto the great and glorious *Jehovah* be all the glory given. And because I hope thy desires are greater than thy expressions, therefore fail not my Soul to shew forth thy love and praises, by giving up thy self wholly to serve, and love, fear and admire that God, who hath done such great and wonderful things for thy Soul that passeth thy understanding: My Beloved is mine, and I am his; Oh how art thou sure of that? What is the peace concluded? Oh happy Conclusion! Oh blessed Conjunction! shall the Stars dwell

with

with the duſt, or the wide diſtant Poles be brought to mutual embraces, and cohabitation? But Oh my Soul, here the diſtance is infinitely greater? And now Rejoyce O Angels, ſhout O Seraphims, and all the Friends of the Bridegroom prepare an Epithalamium, be ready with the Marriage Song; Loe here is the wonder of wonders, For *Jehovah* hath or is about to betroth himſelf for ever to his poor Captive, my poor Soul; And is he ſo indeed as I hope he is, then he owns the Marriage before all the world, and is become one with me, and I with him. And now, O my Lord and my God, cauſe thy face to ſhine on the ſoul of thy ſervant, and ſhew him more and more his vileneſs, that he may lye very low even in the Duſt, and be humbled at thy feet, and let the work which thou haſt begun in the heart of thy poor ſervant be eſtabliſhed for ever, and do more for me than I can require, that thy Name may be Magnified for ever, and that all that hear of this may ſay, The Lord of Hoſts is the God of *Iſrael*.

Amen, Hallelujah.

FINIS.

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